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DIPLOMATIC SKETCHES.

BY

"AN OUTSIDER."

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I.

COUNT BEUST.

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PREFACE.

It is the intention of the Author to review in these sketches the share taken by some of the leading Continental Statesmen or Foreign Representatives at the Court of St. James's, in the politics of their respective countries; and, having endeavoured impartially to sift the vast material before him, the Author hopes that these pages—though written without any pretensions to authoritative criticism — may form a handy contribution to the diplomatic history of the day.

In selecting the career of Count Beust for his first sketch, the Author's aim has been to approach the Oriental Question from an objective point of view, and without having to face the preconceived prejudices attaching to most of the other chief actors.

Moreover, Lord Beaconfield's solution having been to a certain extent foreshadowed in Count Beust's despatch of January 1st, 1867,* this circumstance will add to the interest which falls to his share in Eastern matters, and to the popularity he enjoys amongst us as the staunchest advocate of an Anglo-Austrian alliance.

London, *July* 1878.

* Austrian Red Book, 1866–67, p. 85 *et seq.*

DIPLOMATIC SKETCHES.

PROMINENT amongst all statesmen and diplomatists of the day, Count Beust is, so to say, the last continental representative of the old school—a school of politicians who knew how to reconcile the great traditions of the past with liberal ideas and the progressive development of modern requirements—of a school that jealously watched over the well-balanced equilibrium of Europe, and, guided alone by the respect of right and rights, remembered that at all times great objects entail great responsibilities; that great duties impose great sacrifices on nations as well as on individuals.

In those days public conscience considered it as much a slur on national honour to compound or to tolerate international crime and injustice, as to be guilty of the misdeed itself. Their creed was that the strong should defend and protect the feeble; the good chastise the bad. The statesmen of the past were not, individually perhaps, the "good" men we pride ourselves on possessing, since Cabinets are like glass houses; but as public men they were unassailable when the interests and the dignity of their

employers were at stake: small in little things, but great if the common welfare of Europe was concerned, they looked forward and thought of to-morrow, and were incapable of purchasing peace, *quand même*, by compromising the future.

When the sword of Napoleon I. kept half the world at his feet, when all Continental Powers were stooping before the usurper, England did not ask if noble and isolated resistance would "pay"; but unfurling her glorious flag, she offered shelter within its folds to all victims of the conqueror's sway, and, proudly erect, she alone faced * the lawless giant, to fight the battle of all Europe in the name of right and honour.

Armour-plated against such petty weakness, our age seems to have done away with heroic sentimentality; modern generations worship success, and care not for the rest.

But the application of *chacun pour soi et Dieu pour tous* to political and international relations, is a dangerous motto, "for the wheel of fortune goes round and round," and so do luck, prosperity, and greatness—*chacun son tour*; and history teaches us that the life of nations is nothing but a continuous chase on a cosmopolitan merry-go-round.

The time-honoured notion of keeping the European family in a well-balanced equilibrium, by equalising as far as possible the too capricious ups and downs of the inherent parts, has long been shelved, and the trade in crowns and countries is now no

* Pitt's example was soon followed by Austria.

longer hampered by tedious considerations for international scales and weights; leaving the question of right alone.

Beaumarchais said: "*Le puissant ne se mettant au-dessus des lois que pour traiter les faibles comme s'ils étaient au-dessous, il n'y aurait plus de loi pour personne; on verrait le pouvoir substitué au droit, l'arbitraire à la règle,*" a happy state of things which our age has been witnessing wholesale and retail in all continental questions, and which modern statesmanship has so complacently labelled "might is right." As a consequence of the unfortunate conception of "non-intervention," we have witnessed unmoved the disturbance of the European peace, the defeat of right and justice; and, limiting our part to buying occasionally plaisters for the open wounds of overpowered neighbours, or to providing a decent funeral for a vanquished ally, we have allowed Prince Bismarck boldly to declare "that England is for nothing in his calculations," and we have closed our eyes to the fact that a day must come when the all-absorbing militarism of the modern Cæsar will feel strong enough for measuring swords with the lookers-on. Isolated by a protecting element from an immediate contact with the growing colossus, we have taken the apparent calm near our shores for security, and we have pitifully shrugged our shoulders on seeing continental monarchs, statesmen, and countries bravely battle, bleed and fall, for ideas and principles; on seeing nations wiped from the map of Europe for having gallantly defended their independence, their recog-

nised integrity, for having stood up for the sacredness of treaties and right.

Prejudices of a past age, they have no weight with modern politicians. We live in the era of "might is right," and, priding ourselves on adopting in politics the winning colours, we call those idiots who refuse to wear the livery of some accidental Cæsar.

The traditions of a Pitt seemed nursery tales, the victories of a Wellington antediluvian reminiscences, and we were fast degenerating into a second-rate Power, when the isolated action of Lord Beaconsfield awoke the nation, reminding it of its dormant power and its neglected duties.

Tory or Liberal, Turcophile or the reverse, there is not an Englishman who will not recognise the immense service rendered to the nation, and *par ricochet* to the world at large, by rousing us up from an indifferent somnolence, and by showing us and Europe that Great Britain is still alive.

There are, of course, differences of opinion as to the policy of the Government, and there may be objections to the course adopted; but there can only be one voice when the greatness of the nation is concerned, and in that respect Lord Beaconsfield has done what all Englishmen must hail with satisfaction.

Those who seemed to fear that the conciliating spirit of our Plenipotentiaries at Berlin might prove weakness, and a craving for peace *quand même;* those who loudly denounced the Berlin Treaty as a still-

born infant of the San Stefano Treaty and the Schouvaloff-Salisbury agreement; those who accused our man at the helm of inconsistency, who talked of nothing but diplomatic disasters, and who called our concessions a cowardly compromise, will now perhaps agree that the Salisbury Circular, which told the world what we wanted, and the vote of six millions, which showed that we were in earnest and ready to back our words with the sword, have been supplemented in a way befitting England's dignity and interests by the treaty of June 4th.

Lord Beaconsfield, as was to be expected, has proved himself the great statesman he is. Had he done nothing in his life but to reconquer our old place in the European areopagus, he would have done enough to deserve the lasting gratitude of our country, and it is but right to pay a tribute to this great and patriotic act before entering on my subject.

The programme inaugurated by the provisions of the treaties of the 4th of June and 13th of July, reminding us necessarily of the proposals which Count Beust sketched out in his despatches of the 1st of January, 1867, and in his circular of the 3rd of February of the same year,* will secure additional sympathies in England with the distinguished statesman who has been identified with all leading questions for more than a quarter of a century, and whose name appears on every page of the history of his times as a "*Paladin*" of right and rights. And

* Austrian Red Book, No. 1., 1866-67, pp. 85 and 92.

although we find him on more than one occasion antagonistic to our foreign policy, he has proved himself so great a friend and admirer of our country and of our institutions, and so staunch an advocate of a united action of the Powers, and especially of England and Austria in the East, that I confidently trust an unbiassed perusal of these pages will contribute to secure for the Austrian statesman, in wider circles, the admiration which we claim for all true patriots, wherever we find them.

Placed at the head first of Saxon and then of Austrian affairs, the eminent services which he rendered to his native country, to the Confederation, and finally to the monarchy of the Habsburgs, have necessarily roused the envy of his friends, and have exposed him to unceasing attacks from all sides; yet he may proudly look back on the past, for, if fate has been against him, and if his policy has had to efface itself before the successes of the great Prussian Chancellor, he can say that he has managed for more than seventeen years to prevent Prussia from trespassing on her neighbours' rights and lands, and that he has *comme par enchantement* reconstructed the Austrian Monarchy, which, to use the words of the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse*, he found "in a condition of material exhaustion and neglect, and, what is still worse, in a state of absolute and most lamentable prostration."

During the long years of his public life, whatever his shortcomings may have been, Count Beust's policy has always proved itself a thoroughly German

one, honestly devoted to the welfare of the great Fatherland, and remarkably free from particularistic tendencies. In this respect he differs from other statesmen, whose aim has been to take, whilst Baron Beust only struggled to preserve.

That his task as the political leader of the minor States was in no way an easy one need hardly be said, as short-sighted intrigues, narrow-minded views, and the petty jealousies of the various courts, hampered a joint action at nearly every step; and his colleagues in Saxony, as well as the leading statesmen of the other German cabinets, seemed not to realize that these interior divisions and bickerings were playing into Prussia's hands, whilst the Austrian statesmen continued closing their eyes to the growing tendencies of the Berlin Cabinet, which aimed at nothing less than "*à mettre l'Autriche à la porte de l'Allemagne.*"

But much as he had been thwarted, when Prime Minister of Saxony, by the rivalry and animosity of his Federal colleagues, in almost every one of his efforts "*de refaire l'Allemagne,*" he was to meet with still greater difficulties at Vienna, when, after the Prussian successes, he had not only, as he called it, "*à retrouver l'Europe,*" but also the *débris* of the Austrian monarchy; whilst, luckier than he, Prince Bismarck had only the trouble of picking up kingdoms and duchies under the wheels of the conqueror's chariot.

Ploughing in different directions *ce champ qu'on appelle l'Europe,* as the late Prince Metternich said,

fate had naturally brought Baron Beust and Herr von Bismarck into frequent, one may say constant, opposition, although a caprice of nature had put the cradles of both families close to each other in the Altmark.*

Hesitating for some time between the pulpit and diplomatic handicraft, he decided for the latter, and after the usual years of obscure apprenticeship we find him in 1846 as Saxon Minister at the Court of St. James's, when he had an opportunity for watching at a distance the efforts made of hatching an Imperial cuckoo's egg, which the German democracy had transplanted to our shores.

Envoy at Berlin in 1848, he saw *le revers de la médaille*; he witnessed the sad humiliations of King Frederick William IV., his Majesty's weakness in presence of a mock-representation of the French revolution, and the precipitated departure of the present Emperor for England, where his Royal Highness set so touching an example of democratic humility and bashfulness.†

However, Count, or rather Baron, Beust's real career begins only in 1849, when King Frederick August II. entrusted him with the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, and when it fell to his lot, as at a later period in Vienna, to take the lead of his colleagues. Battling

* Schönhausen is only a few miles from Büste, the ancestral seat from which the Beusts derive their name.

† Herr von Bunsen, the Prussian envoy, having prepared a somewhat gorgeous arm-chair for his Royal Highness at a reception at Prussia House, the fugitive prince insisted upon a chair like everybody else, saying, "*Let us be humble.*"

with the tough and unruly Saxon Radicals was a difficult task in that critical moment, and a severe test for the abilities of the young statesman; yet the Baron displayed, not only at home but beyond the Saxon frontiers, at once those high qualities which shortly after secured him such a prominent place amongst the leading men of the day. One of the greatest services he rendered to the "German" cause was, perhaps, the insertion in the treaty between Prussia, Hanover, and Saxony,* of the clause that this instrument should not be valid without the adhesion of the other German States, a vital point which, "cajoled" by clever Baron Radowitz, the Hanoverian delegate, Dr. Stüve, had quite overlooked, but which the eye of Baron Beust discovered in time to save the north of Germany from being Prussified at that moment.

The patriotic *mémoire*, laid before the Saxon Chambers in 1849,† embodied his desire for securing German unity by an infusion of fresh vitality into the Federal Constitution without sacrificing the autonomy of the individual States; for, since Minister Eichhorn's declaration in 1822,‡ there could be no longer any doubt as to the voracious intentions of Prussia, which, seconded by the dualistic tendencies of the two great German Powers, became the more dangerous, as even Prince Metternich had conceived

* "*Dreikönigsbündniss*," 1849.

† December 28, 1849.

‡ Minister Eichhorn advised Prussia to acquire Hanover "by cajoling and by isolating" her neighbour.

as far back as 1815 the idea of halving Germany on the *Main*.*

To pilot Germany safely through the Scylla of Prussification, and the Charybdis of a division of Germany between the two rivals, Baron Beust thought it of vital importance, firstly, to determine the attributes of the Central Power, and to strengthen it by insuring the subordination of all members; and secondly, to come to some definite understanding on the more than ticklish question of supremacy. Aware of the dangers which an hereditary as well as an elective Imperial dignity would have, he strongly opposed a gravitation towards a centralization into one hand,† in which he saw the unavoidable melting and fusion of all German States into the leading one, should the coveted office fall at some future day into Prussia's grasp, and he pleaded therefore the well-known *Trias* idea. Giving to the united minor States, with their 15,000,000 inhabitants and an army of 200,000 men, the third voice, this scheme would have created a powerful equipoise between Austrian and Prussian ambition, and it would have been in no way derogatory for the German sovereigns to submit to a central power in which they would themselves have been represented.‡ But Baron Beust, in his endeavours to fight the battle of

* Realized in 1866 by Herr von Bismarck, who however substituted the group of the Southern States to Austria, after her denaturalization as a German power.

† "*Einheitliche Spitze.*"

‡ "*Nach innen verträgt die Monarchie Einschränkungen, nach aussen nicht.*"—Baron Beust.

the minor States, and to shield the *Bund* against the dangers which were threatening its existence from Berlin, was only playing the part of *Monsieur Robert* in the '*Médecin malgré lui.*' Sganarelle and his wife, Prussia and the minor States, both came down upon him, and in paralysing his efforts the miscellaneous German statesmen prepared the final triumph of Herr von Bismarck's tactics; but we must not anticipate events.

The Danish as well as the Hessian questions brought the Saxon Premier still more before the European public. The Baron made himself conspicuous by opposing and criticising, in a thoroughly German and conservative spirit, the selfish attitude of the Berlin Government, and its one-sided military demonstrations, as materially affecting the authority of the *Bund*, and as substituting the *tel est notre plaisir* of the Hohenzollerns to the decisions of the Diet. An explosion at this juncture would have been decidedly unfavourable to Prussia, so eager to provoke it, and it was only prevented by the energetic pressure of the Emperor Nicholas and Lord Palmerston,* and by Austria's want of nerve and initiative, as she was contenting herself with an imaginary diplomatic victory, instead of going to Berlin † at the head of the Austro-German armies, so much superior to that

* Lord Palmerston threatening to blockade the German ports if there was a row, and the Czar notifying that he would declare war against the first Power disturbing the peace of Germany, a threat said to have been chiefly directed against his Prussian brother-in-law, whom he considered in this instance to be the cause of all uneasiness.

† Even the present King of Prussia admitted in later days that it would have been easy for the Austrians to have gone to Berlin.

of Prussia in those ante-Moltkian days. Austria * gloried in Olmütz, as in a modern Canossa, to use Prince Bismarck's favourite phrase, yet it was much more "an Austrian weakness than a Prussian defeat," and I have mentioned before what Baron Beust thought of these last flickerings of the once all-powerful Austrian influence.

It was during the period of comparative calm after Olmütz, that the Saxon statesman undertook ventilating his plans for the amalgamation of the commercial interests of all Germany, an idea as patriotic as it would have proved beneficial to all; but Prussia preferred isolated action,† and the Conferences at Dresden, of which Baron Beust had been the soul, had no other result but at last to impress Prince Schwarzenberg, and other too confiding statesmen, with the poor chances, nay, the impossibility of ever coming to an understanding with Prussia on German and common matters.‡ Prussia's aim was too apparent, and one could no longer have

* To render Prince Schwarzenberg justice, it must be said, that he went very reluctantly to Olmütz, he called it "*ein Ueberkleistern des Geschwürs*," and was personally for more stringent measures, which his Imperial master considered, however, dangerous, on account of the Emperor Nicholas's threatening declarations.

† "*Steuerverein*" with Hanover, which was the beginning of Germany's Prussification.

‡ Lord Palmerston wrote on Nov. 22, 1850, to Lord Cowley (E. Ashley, vol. i. p. 242):—"German affairs are indeed come to a state of chaos. The only thing that seems pretty clear is, that all parties are more or less in the wrong. But Prussia seems to bear away the palm in this respect. Her course has been indeed dishonest, inconsistent, and irresolute and weak. In regard to the Schleswig-Holstein question, she has throughout acted with the greatest duplicity and bad faith; in regard to German affairs, her only object from beginning to end seems to have been her own aggrandizement," &c.

any delusions as to her intentions; it was clear that she was speculating upon the ruin of the Confederation with the view of a single-handed management of German affairs under her own guidance. The favourable moment had been lost, and although the Prussian Premier, Baron Manteuffel, seemed personally not badly disposed, it was no longer possible to overcome the endless difficulties thrown into the way of any reforms; the goodwill of Prince Schwarzenberg, the earnest desire of Baron von der Pfordten, and of the ministers of Hanover and Würtemberg, to second Baron Beust in his endeavours for a reconstitution of the Confederation, came too late, for all attempts to infuse a new political and material vitality into the great German nation found in Prussia a stumbling-block.

Certain that a community of interests, an amalgamation of public institutions, the downfall of all barriers in the commercial and daily life of the German countries would cement the union of the common Fatherland, the Prussian Government opposed all measures likely to insure the hoped-for result, which would have limited her to her natural sphere, and would have adjourned the Prussification of Germany *sine die;* and in cajoling Hanover into a separate treaty* the Cabinet of Berlin managed to split the budding *entente*, whilst Austria retorted by inviting all German States to the *Zollconferenz* at

* Prussia proposed a meeting at Görlitz, where M. Delbrück represented Prussia and M. Klentze Hanover, and, by means of the "principuum," Hanover became entangled in the Prussian cobweb, out of which she was not again to extricate herself.

Vienna, thus widening the gap and endangering the federal harmony still more. Baron Beust was too good a German not to see the disadvantage of both schemes; too able a statesman to underrate the difficulties in the way of a common treaty with Austria where the fundamental conditions for a "*Zollunion*" with Germany were wanting, inasmuch as Austria had a paper currency, no census,* and the reputation of abnormally corrupted officials.† The Conferences at Dresden having remained without result, yet anxious to prevent the dissolution of the existing *Zollverein*, which Prussia's selfish and un-German policy was rapidly undermining, Baron Beust brought about the so-called coalition of Darmstadt,‡ by which the minor States pledged themselves to act in common, and to conclude no isolated conventions with either Austria or Prussia. Thus, thanks to the Baron, a united action temporarily saved the *Zollverein*—we might say the *Bund*, and from this moment the Saxon Premier became the recognised leader of a common German policy of the minor States, which took a still more definite shape at the Conferences of Bamberg (1854).

The complications in the Orient gave Baron Beust

* "*Volkszählung.*"

† In later years when Chancellor of Austria, Baron Beust had an opportunity for ascertaining that this reputation of corruption was, to a great extent, exaggerated, and on more than one occasion he testified to the erroneous impressions current abroad on this subject, affecting so large a class of His Imperial Majesty's subjects.

‡ His Majesty the King of Würtemberg declared openly in those days, "that he would never submit to a Hohenzollern," which inspired, so I was told, one of the members of the Conference with a delightful skit on the politics of the day, entitled '*Furchtlos und treu* (Fearless and faithful), *Schwabenstreich in* 3 *Acten.*'

for the first time an opportunity of entering the political arena outside purely German questions: he saw at once the important mission sketched out for a "united Germany" as the pacifying medium between the other great Powers; and all his efforts were directed towards a common diplomatic action of Austria, Prussia, and the consolidated group of minor German States. Taking as his motto "*In trinitate robur*,"* he had the firm conviction that Russia as well as the great Powers would listen to an earnest appeal of all Germany, and that peace could be preserved, nay imposed, as long as Prince Mentchikoff had not left Pera.

Unfortunately the Baron's efforts were of no avail, and the Crimean War—this "unjust and unnecessary" war, to use Lord Aberdeen's and Lord Grey's own words—was allowed to disturb the peace of Europe, without Germany interposing her *veto*, or even proclaiming a strict neutrality, as suggested by the Emperor Francis Joseph in November 1853.† Received with patriotic enthusiasm by most of the German sovereigns, the Austrian proposal was wrecked, like everything coming from Vienna, on Prussia's unwillingness to submit to a common Federal policy;

* Prince Bismarck's family motto.

† On Nov. 22, 1853, Austria inquired confidentially at the various German courts, if a motion for the strict neutrality of the Confederation would have the support of the Federal governments at Frankfort; and foremost of all German sovereigns the King of Hanover expressed his entire concurrence with the truly German proposal of the Emperor Francis Joseph: but Prussia's selfishness fell heavier into the scales than the interests of the common Fatherland; the "brilliant" idea of the Emperor had to give way to Count Buol's pernicious influences on one side and Herr von Bunsen's intrigues on the other.

reserving to herself a "complete liberty of action, according to circumstances,"* she preferred following her own tortuous views, as Prince Albert called it.†

The consequence was, that the Austrian cabinet, distrusting Prussia's honesty, plunged into a vacillating policy,‡ and that Count Buol fully lost his head when Baron Bourqueney, the French Envoy, kindled his fears and apprehensions.

The minor States were all pro-Russian; the King of Prussia was writing sentimental letters to our Queen, telling Her Majesty that "God's law does not justify a war for an idea";§ the Vienna Conference collapsed, and the French and English Governments, evidently determined on acting energetically, refused to adopt the solution proposed by Lord John Russell and M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and accepted by Russia; nay, Her Majesty even went out of her way to remind her Prussian cousin of Shakespeare's words: "Beware of entrance to a quarrel; but being in, bear it, that the opposer may beware of thee"‖—plainly indicating that the sword once drawn, it would not return into its scabbard without "Russia being defeated and chastised;"¶ and the fact is that we continued the war even after Russia had removed all

* "*Die Politik der freien Hand*," as they called it in Prussia.

† Theodore Martin's 'Life of the Prince Consort,' vol. iii.

‡ "*Schaukel-Politik*."

§ Theodore Martin's 'Life of the Prince Consort,' vol. iii.—Letter of the King to Her Majesty, of March 12, 1854.

‖ Letter of Her Majesty to the King of Prussia, March 17th, 1854 ('Life of the Prince Consort,' vol. iii.), previous to the declaration of war on March 28th.

¶ Letter of Prince Albert to King Leopold of Belgium ('Life of the Prince Consort,' vol. iii.).

ground of complaint by evacuating the Principalities. Under these circumstances what was Austria to do? On the 10th of April, 1854, the Protocol of Vienna, guaranteeing the integrity of Turkey and civil and religious rights to her Christian subjects, had been signed by the four Powers, and England and France concluded on the same day an offensive and defensive alliance. Austria and Prussia followed suit by signing ten days later a similar treaty,* by which they guaranteed to each other their German and "non-German" dominions, pledging themselves under certain circumstances to a joint "diplomatic" coercion of Russia, prudently avoiding any allusions to the "armed" intervention of other Powers. To invite the minor States, separately and *post festum*, to join in the provisions of this treaty concluded by Austria and Prussia *qua* Great Powers, was certainly a step in the wrong direction; it was ignoring the Diet as such altogether: a mistake his Prussian Majesty endeavoured to repair by simultaneous negotiations of a confidential nature at the minor Courts, which the King seemed anxious to win for a common policy, diametrically opposed to the spirit and intentions of the Treaty of the 20th of April. Although there can be little doubt that a strong personal sympathy for the Czar, his brother-in-law, prompted King Frederick William in his efforts, it would be unfair not to pay a respectful tribute to the only noble and truly "German" move with which history has to credit Prussia in favour of Austria.

* "*Schutz- und Trutz-Bündniss*," April 20, 1854.

It will be interesting to recollect that Herr von Bismarck—the present Prince Chancellor—was the diplomatist whom the King of Prussia entrusted with this delicate mission of winning the various sovereign princes for His Majesty's intended motion at the Diet; and the day after the signature of the Austro-Prussian Treaty,* Herr von Bismarck arrived at Hanover, where His Majesty, the late King George V., received his Royal cousin's confidential overtures, replying "that he hoped Herr von Bismarck would meet at all German Courts with no more difficulties than in Hanover, as His Majesty had always fervently wished that the Confederation should embrace and protect all non-German possessions of Austria and Prussia, and that he would instruct his envoy at Frankfort heartily to support the King of Prussia's scheme, which so well realized Field-Marshal Radetzky's saying, that the Rhine had to be defended on the Po." But the Prussian motion, which came only on the 24th of July before the Diet, after the French had been embarked for the Baltic, had been anticipated by the "Identical Notes" of Bamberg, where the ministers of Bavaria, Hanover, Saxony, Würtemberg, Baden, the two Hesse and Nassau, had met to consider the official invitation of the two great German Powers to join their separate Treaty of the 20th of April. Inspired and penned by Baron Beust, the "Identical Notes" were a truly "German" answer to the Austro-Prussian anti-federal proceedings, as they insisted upon the importance of

* April 20th, 1854.

associating the *Bund*, as such and in its entirety, with any step eventually to be taken by Austria and Prussia, and protesting against any attempt of subordinating Federal interests to an isolated action of the cabinets of Berlin or Vienna. Indicating a spirited "German" policy, they expressed in patriotic language the outlines for a bold and "German" programme, which unfortunately neither Count Buol nor Baron Manteuffel were the men to understand and to adopt.

Pacific in spirit and form, the Bamberg notes claimed for Germany as a body the right of interference and of being listened to; they illustrated practically the *Trias* idea by demanding that a common initiative should protect common interests; they expressed the belief that the one-sided pressure on Russia, foreshadowed by the additional clause of the Treaty of the 20th of April, should be supplemented by an equal diplomatic coercion of all concerned, as peace seemed impossible unless Russia and the Allies could be induced to recall their armies simultaneously from Turkey; moreover, the "Identical Notes," * in earnestly recommending the maintenance of the European equilibrium and the territorial *status quo* in the East, pleaded warmly "for the protection of the Christian subjects of the Sultan, under the guarantee of all Powers," for the complete liberty of navigation and commerce in Turkish waters, and for

* Baron Beust entrusted by his colleagues with the "*réduction*," this explains the leading part taken by him in the matter.

the inviolable independence of the kingdom of Greece, a concession made to Bavaria on account of King Otho's relations to the Royal House.

That the clear and concise expression of impartial views, as laid down in this specific yet properly resolute programme, should have roused a storm of violent criticism alike from foreign cabinets and Press, cannot surprise us if we remember how little Europe was accustomed to see the minor States have any opinion at all. "D— all the German princes who won't go with us against Russia, because they think they want her to keep down their own people," wrote Prince Albert to the King of the Belgians;* and Lord Clarendon, in a despatch to Mr. Forbes at Dresden, called the Identical Notes "an ill-advised interference," and accused the minor States of being blinded to the extent of not realizing that petty jealousies have to give way in a great crisis. The noble Lord seemed quite astonished when Baron Beust took the liberty of taking up the glove thrown down by our Foreign Office, and when he reminded Lord Clarendon, in a remarkable despatch,† "that the most insignificant member of the German Confederation was a better judge of German interests than any foreign Power," and that moreover if the "Identical Notes displeased Austria and Prussia it would be for them, to whom they were addressed, to say so, but that nothing authorized an intervention

* 'Life of the Prince Consort,' vol. iii.

† Despatch to Count Vitzthum, the Saxon Minister-Resident at the Court of St. James's, July 9th, 1854.

of other European cabinets." Rather bold language to be used to Great Britain; yet unpleasant as it is for a great Power like England to be lectured by little Saxony, one cannot help approving the patriotic and thoroughly German spirit which inspired Baron Beust at the time; and putting ourselves in his place, and setting aside our English feelings, no one can well blame his attempt to vindicate the independence of the *Bund*, nor his pluckily expressed determination not to subordinate German policy to servile complacency and to foreign "bullying."

Events have long since fully justified the course which the Baron's foresight had suggested, and which his patriotism had marked out for Germany;—but it was in vain that he urged Count Buol * not to separate from Prussia and the *Bund* in this matter,—in vain that he condemned the so-called "armed neutrality" of Austria as an ill-inspired half-measure, which would annoy Russia, without satisfying the Allies.†

The Austrian statesman remained deaf to the Baron's entreaties, his warning voice found no echo at the Ballplatz; and how could it be otherwise, when the dogged stubbornness of Count Buol could not even be tempted by King Frederick William IV.'s noble—one might say magnanimous—proposal to

* Count Buol's personal animosity against the Emperor Nicholas was no secret, and dated from the time he was accredited at St. Petersburg—haughty snubs on one side, ruffled vanity on the other.

† Lord Palmerston wrote to the Duke of Newcastle, January 14, 1854 (E. Ashley, vol. ii. p. 67), "Austria has as usual been playing a shabby game."

guarantee to the House of Habsburg its Italian provinces, and not in his name alone, as stipulated in the Treaty of the 20th of April, but also in the name of all Germany, as the price for Austria's adherence to a common policy of all members of the Diet—a course Prussia advocated as warmly now as she had opposed it when the proposal was made by the Cabinet of Vienna in 1853. It is difficult to realize how one could be so blind at Vienna, when it is impossible to believe that Count Buol should have been unaware of the negotiations for an alliance between Piedmont and the English and French cabinets, and of the conditions which the Cabinet of Turin was vainly endeavouring first to worm out of the two Great Powers; namely, that England and France should engage in writing to oblige Austria to repeal the sequestration of the estates of the Lombardian emigrants, and, further, that they should pledge themselves to take into consideration at the ultimate signature of peace the changes which Italy was claiming,*—two conditions, which meant nothing less than a general war had they been accepted in the form suggested by the Turin cabinet.

How different would have been the position of Austria had she either listened to Baron Beust's German programme, or had she openly sided with us and France. It was said at the time that she feared an insurrectionary move in Italy and the hostile attitude of Sardinia; and Mr. Scarlett, our envoy at Florence, in transmitting to Sir James

* 'Life of Victor Emmanuel,' by Giuseppe Massari, vol. i.

Hudson these fears expressed to him by Signor Cauducci, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, was perhaps indirectly the means of suggesting to King Victor Emmanuel and Count Cavour the idea of joining the Allies. At least we are assured on good authority * that Count Cavour exclaimed, when Sir James communicated to him confidentially Mr. Scarlett's letter, that such ideas were so far from his mind, that he would recommend the King's government to send 15,000 men to join the Allies if England and France should ask for it. A conversation which Sir James duly reported to Lord Clarendon, and which ultimately gave birth to the co-operation of Sardinia in the Crimean war; although both the King and Cavour had to overcome endless difficulties with the cabinet, all Ministers being, with the exception of Count Cavour and General La Marmora, against acceding to the Anglo-French Treaty of the 10th of April, and General Dabormida, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, even giving his resignation, so much was he opposed to the bold policy of the Premier.

Had Austria, as it was for some time expected in England, thrown her sword into the scale with our armies, the mere fact of fighting side by side with Sardinia might have contributed to bring about some understanding between the two, and it would no doubt have averted the war of 1859; for when the late King Victor Emmanuel decided upon joining us, he told the French Minister, Duc de Grammont, dis-

* 'Life of Victor Emmanuel,' by Giuseppe Massari, vol. i.

tinctly, "*Si nous n'allons pas là-bas, nous serons entraînés par tous ces criards révolutionnaires à faire quelque maladresse en Italie,*" a conciliatory disposition, of which Austria ought gladly to have availed herself; but exactly as the King and Cavour had foreseen it, she declined to join, and adopted a policy which was certain to dissatisfy everybody, so that his Sardinian Majesty could well say to the French Minister, "*Nos soldats mêlés aux vôtres, je me moque de l'Autriche.*" The Austrian statesmen had neither the good sense of adopting Baron Beust's prudent suggestions, nor old Prince Metternich's idea of amalgamating Austrian interests with those of England and France—*ni chair ni poisson*, Austria indulged in isolated action, or rather in isolated inaction, and that notwithstanding she had the lessons of the past to guide her, and had only to remember Prince Metternich's warnings at the time of the Congress of Vienna, and the Prince's endeavours to win the Western Powers for a common action in the East.

To disregard the Prussian propositions on one side, and not to make sure of the support of England and France in the other alternative, but to put Austria deliberately between two chairs was hardly statesmanlike, and it will remain an enigma how a man of Count Buol's ability could fall into an error which indirectly became the cause of Austria's subsequent misfortunes. Perhaps old Prince Metternich was right when he said that Count Buol was like a knife with a point, but without an edge; and one is

surprised to find that there are still men in Austria, and clever men too, who speak of Count Buol as a great statesman.

But to return to Germany. The proclamation of the solidarity of Austro-Prusso-German interests in international matters, so easy at that moment, would have been the unification of Germany without any violent convulsions; it would have saved Austria from a "suicidal" blunder,* and it would no doubt have contributed to a speedy peace, so much in the interest of all Europe.

Baron Beust pleaded warmly for the adoption of his thoroughly German programme, but Austria remained deaf.† Prussia got lukewarm, and the governments as well as the people in the minor States became more and more indifferent. No one would listen to his warning voice, his motives were misinterpreted, and he was accused of Russian proclivities by the foreign as well as the German press,

* Austria's half-measure policy during the Crimean War isolated her in 1859 and in 1866, and left her without alliances.

† Nay, Austria went even so far to propose, on the 19th of January, 1855, to the minor States to secede from the Confederation, promising to those who would join her a share in the eventual spoil (*wer mitgeht, kann etwas bekommen*); the sound and Federal instinct of the German sovereigns prevented, luckily for their own sake, the adoption of such a truly quixotic policy, which would have indisposed the Allies as much as Russia, which would have made an end to the *Bund*, and given Prussia a grand opportunity for realizing a decennium earlier the Prussification of Germany; and I confess that I am at a loss to understand why Prince Bismarck, so quick as a rule in finding a mote in his neighbour's eye, has never discovered this "beam," which would somewhat have justified his own retaliation in 1866 as far as Austria is concerned.

which seemed unanimous in denouncing Russia as the European "peace-breaker." *

Yet the vast correspondence exchanged between the various Cabinets before and after the Crimean war, attests that far from being a satellite of Russia, the Baron had nothing else at heart but to prevent a disastrous general war, so contrary to all interests, and after its outbreak to facilitate peace. The only reproach even the most violent Russophobes might be able to substantiate, is that the Saxon statesman strenuously opposed any endeavours to draw the *Bund* into a hostile move against Russia; and that he would not admit that Russia had desired this war,† which he believed was only provoked by Napoleon III.'s ‡ injured vanity, and by His Majesty's wish of reviving the military traditions of his great uncle, and of checkmating the influence and preponderance of Russia as the representative and champion of international conservatism, and as the possible

* Berlin papers went so far as to nickname him "Ferdinand Feodorewitch."

† Even Lord Aberdeen seems to have admitted, when too late, that the Crimean War had been "unjust and unnecessary" (Sir T. Sinclair, Defence of Russia, p. 51).

‡ The Emperor Nicholas, although having congratulated Napoleon III. on the "*coup d'état comme un service rendu à la société*," declined to style the self-made Emperor, as it is the usage, "dear Brother," but called His Majesty cavalierly, "*Mon bon ami.*" *Hinc illae lacrimae*; but it is edifying that the feelings of the proud Russian Autocrat were much those of the constitutional *Ré Galantuomo*, who, although owing so much to the Emperor of the French, said coolly one day (in 1860) to the French Minister, Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, "Who is he? this man, this ——; the last comer, an intruder amongst us, let him remember who *he* is and who *I* am," &c. (D'Ideville, 'Journal d'un Diplomate,' p. 23.)

leader of a coalition of Sovereigns, an idea which Count Nesselrode had so much at heart to realize.

How far the Baron was right it is not for me to decide, and it is difficult to form an unbiassed opinion in England, as we were a party to the strife, and must therefore naturally be inclined to think that the only good policy for Germany would have been to follow our lead; but in looking at the matter from a cosmopolitan point of view, it ought to be admitted that Baron Beust did good service to "his" country by keeping the *Bund* out of the war, which otherwise might have taken far greater proportions. But the Saxon Premier did more, and he rendered the most eminent service to Europe in using his personal influence with the Russian Chancellor Count Nesselrode * for hastening on the conclusion of peace, and this, much to the surprise of our Government, at a moment when Lord Cowley expressed his fears in the Tuileries that Russia would not come to terms without another campaign in the spring.†

Visiting Paris after the fall of Sebastopol, in the last days of October 1855, Baron Beust availed himself of his stay in the French capital for discussing with the Emperor, who was then staying at St. Cloud, as well as with Count Walewski, the eventual chances

* In his letters to the Chancellor, as also through the medium of Count, then Baron, Seebach, Count Nesselrode's son-in-law, and for many years Saxon minister in Paris, Baron Beust urged the Chancellor to hasten his acceptance of the only possible basis.

† Lord Palmerston used all his influence at the time to prevent the Emperor from yielding to the pressure of Austria and of the Saxon Premier, and seemed even determined to carry on the war alone with Turkey. (E. Ashley, vol. ii. pp. 103, 104, Letter to Count Persigny.)

for peace; and finding both the Emperor and his Minister favourably disposed,* he urged the Russian Chancellor spontaneously to accept the French *conditio sine quâ non* of the neutralization of the Black Sea, the more so as this question, he thought, was sure to be re-opened at some future day.

But Count Nesselrode seemed at first little inclined to listen to sensible advice, and it was only when Baron Beust sent Baron Seebach, the Saxon Minister at the Tuileries, at the special request of the Emperor of the French, to St. Petersburg,† that the final consent of the Russian Court to the preliminaries of peace was obtained.‡

An incident, which quite recently has given rise to a polemic in the *Nord*, and in some of our Tory papers, may here be mentioned. Baron, or rather now Count, Seebach had very injudiciously unearthed his share in the matter, and indulged in giving the world his appreciations of Western policy in Eastern affairs, with which, rightly or wrongly, he thought fit to couple the name of Lord Beaconsfield, then Mr. Disraeli.

Although Count Seebach's letter in the *Nord* was, to put it mildly, unnecessary and out of place, I cannot help pitying him, that the blank in our Premier's memory § should have put so much cold water over his liliputian importance; and I cannot help thinking

* His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon III. considered the fall of Sebastopol as fully satisfying the honour of the French arms.

† December 1855.

‡ On March 30, 1856.

§ Letter of Lord Beaconsfield to Sir Stafford Northcote of June 30, 1867.

that Lord Beaconsfield has been a little too hard on the poor Count; for, having spent all his life in the midst of weighty questions of world-wide interest, it is but natural that many details should have escaped his Lordship's memory, whilst it is certain that the unfortunate Count Seebach would not forget "his private Austerlitz," *i.e.* his personal participation in a great European matter. Moreover, the fact cannot be questioned that the Saxon Foreign Office played an important part in the preliminary peace negociations with Russia in 1855-6, negociations which H.R.H. Prince Albert criticised very sharply at the time.*

But if Baron Beust's *bons offices* during the last stage of the Crimean War, his personal relations with Count Nesselrode, and his serious disapproval of Count Buol's provoking demands † had induced his antagonists to accuse him of Russophilism, the Italian campaign vindicated his thorough independence, and proved once more that personal sympathies or antipathies were foreign to his mind the moment German dignity was at stake, or the policy of the common Fatherland *en jeu*.

Napoleon's unfortunate idea of Italy "free to the Adria,"—a child of Carbonarism, that is, of fear; and

* Theodore Martin, 'Life of the Prince Consort,' vol. iii.

† It was Count Buol who insisted most upon the cession of a part of Bessarabia to Roumania, as if it had any importance for the Austrian Empire to have the Russians a few miles farther off the Pruth, and it only irritated Russia considerably, whilst it in no way satisfied Lord Palmerston, whose correspondence clearly shows that he was far from feeling the least obligation to Austria's meddling interference, and to Count Buol's impolitic half-measures.

of Imperialism, that is, of ambition,—started the dangerous question of Nationalities, thus undermining the equipoise of Europe, the traditional rights of many, and the security of all, as the sequel must have taught him when the seclusion at Chiselhurst gave him leisure to study the effects of Italian and German unity, and of what Montesquieu called "the extraordinary vicissitudes of history."

The Emperor's brilliant successes in the Crimea, his ability of putting the Napoleonic legend once more in the saddle, and his dexterity in making himself, at the expense of Great Britain, protector of the Orient, and deputy *arbiter mundi* in the Occident, had intoxicated His Majesty, and already, in 1856, he made no secret to Lord Clarendon of his ambitious dreams to break Austria's preponderance in Italy and Germany, and it is well known that he chiefly advocated the tardy admission of Prussia to the Congress of Paris in order to secure the friendship of the rising star.

Count Cavour's negociations with the Emperor at Plombières in 1858 respecting the marriage of Princess Clothilde and Prince Napoleon matured the blow intended against the House of Habsburg. The hereditary jealousy of the House of Brandenburg was sure not to object. The *Bund*, *minus* Prussia, was not to be feared. Opposition from Russia seemed not likely after Austria's impolitic attitude during the Crimean War. Great Britain alone had to be considered, and there is little doubt that a strong current in favour of Austria was prevailing

at the time at Court and in Government circles. The late Lord Derby proclaimed openly "that he would knock down the first man who should break the peace of Europe," and Lord Palmerston was alone caressing the idea of substituting a constitutional *régime* to absolute rule by excluding Austria altogether from Italy. No doubt his stay at Compiègne in November 1858, so shortly after Cavour's visit, contributed not a little in confirming the Emperor in his idea of "*l'Italie rendue à elle-même*,"* yet the decided attitude of our Government, and the fears entertained at St. Petersburg that an encouragement of revolutionary movements in Italy might become contagious, acted as dampers on Napoleon's ardour, and once more it was thought possible to settle the whole matter by a European Conference. How Austria could be so foolish not to accept, *à bras ouverts*, this proposal, can hardly be conceived, when both England and Russia were ready to guarantee the territorial *status quo* of all Italian States as the basis of the negociations, and only demanded that Austria should evacuate the Papal dominions; when the Cabinet of Vienna was not only aware that Piedmontese intrigues and revolutionary machinations were preparing her overthrow, but that they were encouraged by Napoleon III. and favourably viewed in England by men of Lord Palmerston's standing, who, returning to office, might at any moment give a very different direction to the friendly

* Lord Palmerston said after the Conference of Zürich it meant "*l'Italie vendue à l'Autriche.*"

and conciliating policy of his country; and when, moreover, the Austrian statesmen could not be blind to the fact that they were wasting their already scant resources in supporting the most contradictory systems in Italy, and in allowing the Austrian name and influence to be used, *à toute sauce*, by simultaneously backing up the liberal government of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the autocratic *régime* of Modena, and the clerical sway of the Pope. *Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat*, and the 1st of January, 1859, was to teach Count Buol that the hour of reckoning was approaching, and that Napoleon III. had matured a solution of his own for the overstrained relations between Austria and Sardinia.

Baron Beust, who had followed these fluctuations of the political barometer with uncommon anxiety, naturally saw in an Austrian defeat in Italy a serious blow to German interests.

On his way to Lisbon, where he was formally to ask for the hand of the Infanta Maria Anna, the present Princess George of Saxony, the Baron stopped in Paris with the view of trying a last and serious appeal for the maintenance of peace; and there is no doubt that the Emperor was much struck with the Saxon statesman's clear and concise appreciation of the situation, and with his arguments respecting the pro-Austrian public feeling in Germany; and had not Count Pourtalès thwarted the Baron's efforts by plainly contradicting his statements, and by indicating that Austria would not have Prussia's

support, there is every reason to believe that the Emperor would have postponed once more the realization of his vague and nebulous *principe des nationalités*, afraid, as he was, that a false move in the Italian question might provoke a solidarity of German interests which was not in the Napoleonian programme.

Unfortunately all combined against a pacific solution, and Count Buol's blundering ultimatum to Sardinia not only precipitated matters, but what is worse, it contrived to put Austria apparently in the wrong, thus alienating from her the sympathies on which otherwise she might have reckoned in Germany and in England. Baron Beust gave up his voyage to Lisbon, and hastened to Frankfort to confer with the various representatives of the Federal States, and from there, by order of the King of Saxony, he went to London. Having the honour of being received by the Queen and Prince Albert, he had the privilege of laying before Her Majesty a programme of mediation recommended by King John, and which apparently was well received. Prince Albert and Lord Derby* were favourably disposed, and Lord Malmesbury even went so far to tell him at the dinner-table of Her Majesty, "That the

* When one remembers that Lord Derby had for years expressed his belief that it would be a wise thing for Austria to give up Lombardy—and he said so distinctly in 1850 to the late King of Hanover when Crown Prince—one must admire the sentiment of right and justice which induced him to support Austria, as long as she had not compromised her good cause by a suicidal move, and as long as she had not forfeited her claims by a rash and injudicious act, which, putting her in the wrong, made good the bad case of her antagonists.

moment had come for the *Bund* to move." But the awkward clumsiness of the Cabinet of Vienna pushing the Emperor Francis Joseph to cross the Ticino—"this criminal enterprise," as Lord Derby called it afterwards—materially affected public opinion in Europe. By this wrong move at the wrong moment Austria became not only *de facto* the aggressor, but managed thus to make the world forget that she had been for years the victim of systematic hostility, whilst her case would have been a very different one had she patiently left the initiative of the disturbance of peace to Sardinia, who had been preparing and provoking the conflict under the guidance of the Imperial prompter in the Tuileries, whose threatening language indicated—as far back as 1851 and 1856—that he contemplated a remodelling of the Italian map.

When Baron Beust returned to Frankfort he found matters already considerably altered, and the instructions received by Sir Alexander Mallet were in no way friendly to Austria. Lord Cowley's wise proposal of a simultaneous disarmament of France, Austria, and Sardinia, came too late, and with the return of the Palmerston-Russell administration Austria's fate was definitely sealed, as Lord Palmerston's Italian policy was of a far more radical nature than even that of the inventor of "Italy free to the Adria."

In Germany Austria was not to fare much better. Prussia affected being seriously hurt by Count Buol's no doubt inexcusable proceedings, and one can hardly

believe it, that the very day Piedmont was summoned to demobilize, Count Buol telegraphed to the Archduke Albert, then on a confidential mission at Berlin, to assure the Prince Regent "that nothing would be done in Italy without previously consulting Prussia." It so happened that whilst His Imperial Highness was transmitting this message to the Prince of Prussia, His Royal Highness received the telegraphic news of the ultimatum; and the Archduke felt so disgusted at being placed in so false and ridiculous a position that he left at once for Vienna, whilst the Prussian Cabinet made, naturally, the best of this apparent breach of faith.

In vain did His Majesty the King of Hanover hurry to Berlin; in vain did His Majesty propose a course the honour and dignity of the common Fatherland, as well as a wise prescience, was dictating to his truly German patriotism: Prussia remained indifferent, and her suggestion of a mobilization of the Federal armies was only a blind for screening her motives, and a cunning pretext for calming the chivalrous ardour of the German sovereigns and people, and for keeping the minor States quiet and "in hand," whilst Count Buol's inconsiderate aggression offered Baron Schleinitz the opportunity of making Germany believe that the Viennese Cabinet had wantonly plunged into an "avoidable" war, in hopes of dragging Prussia and the Confederation likewise into the strife. Neverthless the sympathies in Germany continued in favour of Austria, and that notwithstanding our notification at Frankfort, that

England would not protect the German coast in case of an outbreak of hostilities between the *Bund* and France. But if the warlike proclivities of the minor States were checked by the exaggerated demands of Prussia, claiming the command-in-chief of all German armies not in hercapacity as member of the Diet* but *qua* Prussia, Prince Gortschakoff's unjustifiable presumption to lecture and to intimidate Germany provoked a unanimous outcry of indignation. Baron Beust's reply to the Russian philippic† was quite a gem, and ably asserting his patriotism, independence, and judgment, it proved that far from being a Russian "satellite," as unjustly he had been styled during the Crimean War, he was every inch a German, and well fitted for defending the honour and dignity of the *Bund* attacked in his person. It would be too long to mention this patriotic document‡ *in extenso*, and I will only say that he protested in the most courteous language against the Russian Chancellor's preposterous interference in Federal matters; and reminding the Prince of Article 47 of the Treaty of Vienna, countersigned by Russia as well as by all the other European Powers, the Baron begged Prince Gortschakoff not to forget that the Confederation had a perfect right to peace and war, and, although of an

* To facilitate the Prince Regent's acceptance of the command-in-chief of the Federal armies, and not to hamper His Royal Highness's movements and free action, all obnoxious paragraphs of the "*Bundes-Kriegsverfassung*" had been suspended.

† Despatch of Prince Gortschakoff of May 15, 1827, to Prince Wolkonsky, Russian Envoy at Dresden, with orders to read to Baron Beust.

‡ Despatch of Baron Beust to Baron Könneritz, the Saxon Envoy at St. Petersburg, June 15, 1859.

eminently peaceful disposition, the duty of defending the "collective" and "individual" rights of the Diet and of its members if attacked. Alluding to the attitude of the *Bund* during the Crimean War, the Baron concluded with the assurance that it was only out of deference for the Imperial Government that he accepted an anticipated discussion on eventual decisions of the Diet, which seemed to inspire the Chancellor with so much solicitude, "*pour la solidité de l'assiette intérieure.*" This despatch, which met even with the approval of the Prince Regent, the present Emperor William, did not miss its effect, and it took Prince Gortschakoff fully ten years to digest it,* yet one might have thought that he would have rendered justice to the Baron's foresight, for although delighted at the Austrian defeat, he approved in no way the annexations of Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and declared "that this question was one of general interest, and bound up in those eternal laws without which neither order nor peace nor security can exist in Europe;" but having shed a tear over the victims of the Italian unity, and seeing that he could only *faire bonne mine à mauvais jeu*, Prince Gortschakoff afterwards tried to make a little capital for his own views out of the matter, and pretending that the events in Italy had re-echoed in the East, and had awaked hopes and given encouragement, he began to plead the cause of Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria, without, it is true, any effect at the time.

* It was only in 1869 that Prince Gortschakoff met Count Beust, then Austrian Chancellor at Ouchy, and that they made up their little personal feud of 1859.

However, notwithstanding the lance broken by Baron Beust for Germany's right to an opinion and to "free action," nothing came of it; for what could the minor States, Bavaria, Hanover, Saxony, and the other members of the Confederation, do without Prussia, where the Court party—*die Kreuzzeitungs-Partei*—the centralistic Gotha faction and cosmopolitan radicals, seemed united in their delight at a possible dismemberment of the Habsburg monarchy?

The proposal of His Majesty the late King of Hanover,* for the immediate mobilization of a Federal army of observation on the Rhine, was only taken into consideration when Prussia knew that it was too late, and had no other result but of hurting her *amour propre*, and of rousing the personal animosity and vindictiveness of the Emperor of the French, which Prussia did not omit to fan at the right moment; and there is little doubt that Napoleon III. remembered in 1866 the chivalrous boldness of the King of Hanover in having so warmly taken Austria's part in 1859.

All endeavours at Frankfort were in vain; the price demanded by Prussia was too dear—*ægrescit medendo*—the remedy would have been worse than the evil; the undivided political and military dictorship claimed by the Berlin Cabinet would have been more injurious to Austrian and German interests than any possible disasters in Italy. The failure of

* The King of Hanover's proposal was laid before the Diet on May 13, 1859, and the Emperor of Austria telegraphed from Verona his readiness to let Prussia have the command of the Federal armies, including three Austrian army corps.

Prince Windischgrätz's mission *in extremis* to Berlin was, even more than Solferino or Magenta, the immediate cause of the hasty Treaty of Villafranca.

Unnerved by his unexpected reverses, deserted by fortune as well as by his natural allies, the Emperor Francis Joseph gave way to the winning charm of Napoleon III.'s persuasion, when, after having unsuccessfully applied to Lord Palmerston for England's *bons offices*, he was left to act for himself. An Italian Confederation under the presidency of the Pope, the union of Lombardy,* and the return of the Grand Dukes to their States, was to be the basis of the new state of things, which found as little favour with Lord Palmerston † as it naturally did with Count

* I would recommend to all who take an interest in the very conspicuous part taken by us "behind the scenes," to read Lord Palmerston's letters to Count Persigny, Lord Cowley, and Lord John Russell, in July 1859 (E. Ashley, vol. ii. pp. 158–165).

† With respect to Lombardy, it will be rendering a homage to the unfortunate Emperor Maximilian to quote a conversation of Count Cavour with Baron Talleyrand, the French minister at Turin, shortly after the cession: "Savez-vous, dit-il un jour au Baron de Talleyrand, quel fut en Lombardie, pendant l'occupation autrichienne, notre ennemi le plus terrible, celui que je redoutais le plus, *et dont je comptais avec terreur, chaque jour le progrès?* Non. Eh bien! ce fut l'Archiduc Maximilien, le dernier Vice-roi du Royaume Lombard-Vénitien. Il était jeune, actif, entreprenant. Il s'était voué tout entier à la tâche difficile de ramener les Milanais, *et certes il y eût réussi.* Déjà sa persévérance, ses bons procédés, *son esprit juste, libéral, nous avaient enlevé de nombreux partisans. Dans aucun temps les provinces lombardes n'avaient été aussi prospères, aussi bien administrés.* Je commençais à m'inquiéter; mais grâce à Dieu, le bon gouvernement de Vienne intervint, et selon son habitude, saisit, sans retard, l'occasion de faire une maladresse, un acte impolitique, *le plus funeste à la fois pour l'Autriche et le plus salutaire pour le Piémont. Les réformes pleines de sagesse de l'Archiduc* avaient porté ombrage au vieux parti de la Gazette de Vérone, et l'Empereur François Joseph, bien avisé ce jour-là, rappela de Milan son frère Maximilien. *Je respirai en apprenant cette*

Cavour, whose retirement from office indicated clearly that he intended in no way to be a party to a treaty which, to use Lord Palmerston's words, "would rivet on Italy a remnant of Austrian shackles."

It cannot be the object of these pages to enter upon a discussion on the wisdom of Lord Palmerston's Italian policy; but it is at any rate interesting to note that he far "out-Italianised" the Emperor of the French, and that in his wish to substitute a constitutional *régime* to the absolute system prevailing in the different Italian States,* Lord Palmerston overlooked the danger of thus rearing military units. Ready to sacrifice the traditional rights of the reigning dynasties to true liberty, he only helped in creating military agglomerations, with constitutional labels, two new and promising navies,† and an utter disturbance of the European equilibrium, which needed the many smaller States in order to stop the ever ready military Powers from keeping the world in constant uneasiness. Lord Palmerston's letter of July 13th, 1859, to Count Persigny, then French ambassador at our Court, will best give an idea of his views; he said, "*Une fois que l'Autriche devient*

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nouvelle ; rien n'était perdu, la Lombardie ne pouvait plus nous échapper!" (D'Ideville, "Journal d'un Diplomate," p. 11.)

* A certainly highly commendable aim, but which surely might have been obtained without encouraging the overthrow of thrones and incontestable rights, simply by encouraging and supporting men like the Archduke Maximilian, under whom Lombardy had been more prosperous and better off than ever before, if we are to believe Count Cavour.

† Lord Beaconsfield, so I am assured on high authority, has repeatedly expressed his belief that our Prussian and Italian policy had been the cause of creating a German and an Italian navy—two mistakes in his mind.

*membre d'une confédération italienne, toute l'Italie est livrée pieds et mains liés à l'Autriche. Jamais l'Angleterre ne pourra s'associer à un si mauvais arrangement. Au contraire, nous pourrions croire de notre devoir de protester hautement, et en face de l'Europe, contre un pareil asservissement des peuples d'Italie."** At any rate, there can be no doubt that the patriotic efforts of Count Cavour were even better seconded by Lord Palmerston's pen than by Napoleon's victorious armies. The previsions expressed by Baron Beust on June 3rd in the Saxon Chambers, seemed on the point of being realized; the Austrian disaster, Villafranca, the Treaty of Zürich, were as many nails in the coffins of both the *Bund* and Imperial France; and little did the Emperor of the French anticipate that the *lex talionis* was at his heels, that he was hatching a Prussian colossus under the ruins of the Austrian Empire. Deluded by success, and haunted by the spectre of Carbonarism, he had fancied strengthening France by breaking the power of the House of Habsburg, whilst he had only been paralysing the knives of Italian assassins and preparing disasters for France and his own dynasty, which were not even to be soothed by Italy's gratitude.

* Without wishing to do the memory of Lord Palmerston any injustice, and fully remembering that it was the autocratic form of the Austrian and Italian governments which provoked the antagonism of England, there seems to have been nevertheless a little additional spite on account of Austria's "shabby" policy, and also on account of the unfriendly attitude of the King of Naples during the Crimean War, for already in 1855 Lord Palmerston declared it impossible to renew friendly relations with King Bomba, unless His Majesty changed his *foreign and domestic policy*.

After the Italian tragedy the attention of the German Governments was of course directed towards a revision of the Federal Constitution, and to a military re-organization of the *Bund*, which both in the hour of need had proved inadequate for the protection of common interests; and here again we find Baron Beust taking, as usual, the initiative. At the conferences of Munich and of Würzburg he found ample opportunities for ventilating his views, but without any practical result, as Prussia was doing her best to let all projects of reform wreck on her more and more clearly formulated pretensions, which only aimed at absorbing the attributes of the Diet, and at stripping Austria of her time-honoured leadership.

Yet if Baron Beust had been the staunch antagonist of Prussia's un-German attitude in 1859, and if he was valiantly battling against her repeated attempts of Prussifying the *Bund*, and of substituting the interest of the House of Hohenzollern to that of the German nation; he was the first to adhere to any proposals coming from Berlin if they seemed likely to further the German unity, and he never hesitated recommending to all members of the Confederation, individually to make any sacrifices if for the good of the community. His Reform project of the 20th of November, 1861, was the practical utterance of a most careful study of German wants and deficiencies; a masterpiece of thought and practical statesmanship. The distribution of the voices, the part of each State was carefully pondered, an alternating leadership of Austria and Prussia seemed

fair to both, and entering into the spirit of the times it was only doing justice to the people to associate the various parliaments in the management of German affairs—it would have infused new validity and life into the shaky Federal edifice, but not even the minor States recognised in it the saving straw. Baron Beust found no support for his schemes; Count Rechberg, though having encouraged him to make a proposal for a reform of the Federal constitution, had all sorts of scruples and objections, and demanded that all non-German provinces of Austria* should form part of the Confederation if Austria was to consent to an alternating presidency. But Prussia was still more exacting, and Count Bernstorff, after extolling "the clear and ingenious conception" of the Baron, gave it to be understood that Prussia would only be a party to a re-organized Confederation, if the military command and the representation of the *Bund* was entrusted solely to her hands, thereby excluding Austria altogether from any new combination, and, moreover, objecting to a Federal Court (*Bundesgericht*), and to the idea of a Federal parliament, so that there was not the least chance of coming to an understanding; thus Baron Beust's reform project had the fate of the many measures he had recommended for saving Germany, and the autonomy of the various States.

Yet when the revision of the general tariff, and

* A demand which, when proposed by Saxony in 1851, might easily have been realized, but was ridiculed at the time by the Austrian statesmen.

the Treaty of Commerce of 1862, between Prussia and France, came to his notice, he hesitated not a moment to advise His Majesty the King of Saxony to join; although in my humble opinion it was perhaps a mistake that uniform commercial institutions for all Germany and Austria were not insisted upon, before plunging into isolated negociations with France, which had certainly less for object a cementing of German interests than the furtherance of the Prussian leadership at home and abroad. Prussia knew too well that, by concluding this treaty based upon the principles of Free-trade, she was creating a new gap between Austria and Germany: she wanted thus to bind her own hands, and to leave Austria out in the cold; isolating her furthermore by the recognition of Italy,* one of Herr von Bismarck's first and best moves on the political chessboard.

Baron Beust's action in this matter made him of course for a time *persona gratissima* in Berlin, where he met Herr von Bismarck for the first time in May 1863, and so much was the Prussian Premier fascinated by the Saxon statesman's mind and manners, that he treated him to one of those noisy demonstrations in which his realistic nature † delights so much, demonstrations which have for interpreters

* The animosity in Berlin, and specially at Court, was so great that the members of the Italian Legation were even blackballed in the clubs, and the Prussian Government persisted in receiving Count de Launay (the present Ambassador) only as Envoy "of King Victor Emmanuel," who was openly styled "*Räuberkönig*;" while Prince Carini, the Envoy of the dethroned King of Naples, was overwhelmed with attentions.

† "*Studentennatur.*"

Helmerding — the Berlin Toole — and the pit of the Wallner Theatre, the arena in ordinary where the Berlin mob immortalises the favourites of the day in senseless improvisations, and where idiotic *couplets* dub princes and statesmen alternately heroes or knaves, according to the popular fancies and caprices of the moment, for which *Wallner's* has been for years the official barometer. Baron Beust had to submit to one of these burlesque ovations at Herr von Bismarck's "special" request, and both hardly could anticipate that these identical footlights would witness a few years later the most inimical display of popular feeling towards the same man, whom the adulations of King Mob seemed so eager to win in 1863.

Rumour even said that the future Chancellor of the future Empire went so far as to offer Baron Beust the Prussian portfolio of Foreign Affairs; and if we are to believe a well-known Prussian statesman, the Baron's refusal has been one of the causes of Herr von Bismarck's animosity in later years; at least, when questioned why the Chancellor seemed so very bitter against Baron Beust, Herr von Savigny replied in his sarcastic way, "*Verschmähte Liebe*"— rejected love.

The Polish insurrection of 1863, the mingled feelings of sympathy and fear and the undecided attitude of the Great Powers, confined to the lukewarm diplomatic intercession of Great Britain, France, and Austria, offered Baron Beust another opportunity for raising his warning voice, and for

pointing out the dangers of the course taken by Austria; but again the Emperor's advisers renewed their nefarious policy of shuffling half-measures, incapable of elevating themselves to any great and independent conception, and always in the wake of some ill-inspired coalition; it was only when too late that Count Rechberg admitted "that Herr von Bismarck might, at that time, have been crushed in the bud." It was Austria's fate to do as usual the wrong thing in the wrong moment, and it was in vain that Baron Beust pointed out the inevitable consequences and the clouds which were accumulating on the political horizon.

But when Austria's and Prussia's attitude compelled him to decline Napoleon's invitation to a European Congress, where Germany, headed by the two great German Powers, might have recovered her lost prestige, and given a new turn to her antiquated policy of *laisser faire*, he lost all illusions as to the future, and he deeply felt the humiliating position the Federal machinery was placed in; moreover he fully anticipated that the Emperor of the French would seize the first opportunity, and revenge himself for not having been better seconded in Poland, and he very justly feared that the "*Bund*" would have to pay the *pots cassés* ere long.

Baron Beust's presentiments were only too soon realized; and when England stood in need of the concurrence of France in the unfortunate Danish question, the Emperor declined moving, in hopes that

his studied inactivity and his apparent indifference might embarrass the Queen's Government, thus thoughtlessly forging another nail for his coffin; yet the Danish affair, which was to be the cause of the ruin of, first, the *Bund*, and then of France, affected us little at the time, and only in after years by the utter disturbance and shifting of the European equilibrium.

But before touching the Danish tribulations, we must have a glance at the events which preceded this critical period, and which prepared the Bismarckisation of Germany.

It would lead too far for a sketch like the present to try and fathom the question of a reform of the Federal Constitution in Germany, interesting at the time, but obsolete now that the Confederation has ceased to exist; yet I may be allowed to mention that Baron Beust was the first to submit, in 1861, an elaborate project of reform to the cabinets of Vienna and Berlin, proposing "an alternative leadership of Austria and Prussia, and a *constitutional* representation of the people;" a programme which had, however, not the good fortune of satisfying Count Rechberg and Count Bernstorff, the two Ministers of Foreign Affairs, who both desired *la part du lion* for their countries, and who were both opposed to anything capable of curtailing the respective positions of their masters by a well-balanced subdivision of influence and power. On the other hand, the minor States, and foremost the Kings of Bavaria, Hanover, and Würtemberg, seemed little satisfied at being

doomed to be something like buffers between Austria and Prussia, without a share, or rather a turn in the leadership, which would possibly have disposed their majesties more favourably to Baron Beust's scheme.

However the example given, reform projects crept up like mushrooms, and amongst the more remarkable meetings stands foremost the Conference at Vienna, where the envoys of the four kingdoms, the two Hesse, and Nassau, had met to discuss the latest Austrian proposals—Prussia having declined to join, as she intended to reform the *Bund* in her own way—and which resulted in a motion at the Diet to associate delegates of the various German Parliaments in the difficult task of revising the Federal Constitution.

Nearly simultaneously Julius Fröbel had called a meeting of eminent patriots,* to whom he submitted a modified project based upon the *Trias* idea, but with the novel feature of three assemblies instead of two. The German sovereigns, reinforced by a legion of mediatised princelings, were to sit in an extra-Upper House (*Fürstenhaus*); representatives of the various Governments in a second assembly (*Staatenhaus*); and delegates of the different Parliaments in the People's house. However, neither this new parliamentary trinity, nor the other proposals ventilated at Rosenheim, had practically any other result but to kindle the Reform agitation throughout Germany, and to show the necessity for arriving at some solution. In consequence of these efforts to come to an under-

* In September 1862, at Rosenheim, and it was said that Count Rechberg had given his tacit "*valet*" to M. Fröbel's undertaking.

standing, Herr von Schmerling came forward with a new project,* which in a modified form was soon after to form the basis of the proposals of the Emperor Francis Joseph at the *Fürstentag* of Frankfort on the 17th of August, 1863, at this fatal meeting of the German sovereigns, which, the child of a camarilla,† and forced upon the princes against the wish of many,‡ was contrary to all common sense, the moment Prussia refrained from taking part in the deliberations; and Count Rechberg is the more to blame in this matter, as there is no secret that he was much opposed to the whole scheme, yet he fathered the idea, which he knew was stillborn, to serve his personal aims, and to prepare the fall of Herr von Schmerling. The meeting of the Emperor Francis Joseph and the King of Prussia at Gastein (August 2nd, 3rd, and 4th) ought to have opened the eyes of the Cabinet of Vienna; and surely King William's desire to have the Congress of Princes postponed to the 1st of October did not deserve the proceedings adopted by His Imperial Majesty, and which are hardly conceivable when one takes into account the Emperor's

* Herr von Schmerling's project being somewhat too liberal, the Emperor accepted the chief points of Herr von Dörrenberg's programme, which was warmly recommended by the Duke of Coburg and Prince Thurn and Taxis.

† The chief promoters were the Duke of Coburg, Prince Thurn and Taxis, and the representative of the 16th voice at the Diet, Herr von Linde.

‡ His Majesty the King of Hanover, on receiving his invitation, exclaimed, "*Will Oesterreich sich und uns alle caput machen?*" (Does Austria wish to ruin herself, and all of us into the bargain?) and his Majesty the King of Saxony also entreated the Emperor not to proceed in his undertaking without Prussia.

chivalrous nature, who in this instance must have been carried away by the patriotic aim which His Majesty had in view. Naturally the King of Prussia felt hurt by receiving the formal invitation for August the 16th, two hours after he had taken leave from the Emperor with the understanding that the Congress should take place in October, and the Princes be invited jointly by Austria and Prussia, and it must not have been difficult for Herr von Bismarck to show to his master this new trump placed into Prussia's hands, and to induce His Majesty, contrary to the advice of the Queen and of the Crown Prince, to decline the invitation altogether.

Baron Beust, who was accompanying King John, had naturally been opposed to the meeting, when he saw Herr von Bismarck's determination not to let the King of Prussia take any part in the proceedings; but his remonstrances were of no avail, and it was in vain that he pointed out the dangerous consequences o fso imprudent and useless a step. The Austrian statesmen persisted in what they called "the great German feat,"* and on the 17th of August, nearly all German Sovereigns,† with the exception, of course, of the King of Prussia, met at Frankfort, when His Majesty the King of Saxony offered to take a written invitation of all princes assembled to Baden-Baden,‡ and personally to make a last

* "*Die grosse Deutsche That.*"

† Some of the princes were prevented by illness from attending.

‡ The Kings of Prussia and of Saxony were married to Princesses of Saxe-Weimar, the third sister being the wife of Prince Charles of Prussia, mother of the "Red Prince."

effort to bring his royal brother-in-law to Frankfort, and to induce His Majesty to alter a decision so prejudicial to the common interest, and so threatening for the future.

Attending upon King John on this painful errand, Baron Beust had the sad satisfaction of witnessing the Prussian *non possumus** which Herr von Bismarck squeezed out of his master, although King John's patriotic eloquence had already obtained a half promise to come after all. The Prussian Premier knew the advantages Prussia could draw from this Austrian mistake, and holding good, he allowed the Congress to end with a miserable *fiasco*; inevitable when the Viennese Cabinet had not even the pluck of adopting the only measure which might have given some result, which would at any rate have embarrassed the Prussian Government considerably, and which might have placed Herr von Bismarck in an unpleasant dilemma. It was Baron Beust's proposal to summon at once the Chambers of all German States, and to submit to them the reform project "*tel quel à prendre ou à laisser*;" and there were ten chances to one that the German representatives would rather have accepted the programme than let the opportunity slip for getting a share and a voice in the Federal business. But working as usual "*pour le Roi de Prusse*," the Austrian Premier pooh-poohed the suggestion, which had the more chances of suc-

* Bismarck threatened with his resignation, and declared openly, "*Sie wollen uns ins Verderben reissen, es soll ihnen nicht gelingen!*"

ceeding, as Herr von Bismarck was at that time *à couteaux tirés* with the Prussian second Chamber.*

But to complete the *imbroglio*, Count Rechberg invited the minor States to a conference at Nürnberg, where he and Baron Biegeleben brought forth the mad † proposal of a rump-government ‡ and a Germany without Prussia, which, it is needless to say, was unanimously declined; but Count Rechberg was so angry at his failure that he exclaimed, "I will show that *I too* can make treaties with Prussia!" And exactly as the Austrian treaty of commerce with us was nothing but a *paroli* for Prussia's commercial treaty with France, so Count Rechberg's plunge into Herr von Bismarck's arms and policy was nothing but spite, at the refusal of the minor States to join him in the absurd undertaking to exclude Prussia from the direction of German affairs: and in this instance again Baron Beust had been foremost in upholding a Federal point of view; but, although much disheartened by seeing his own plans of reform alternatively thwarted by either one or the other of the two great German Powers, he did not yet despair, and persevering to the last in his efforts, he has not to blame himself for the final collapse of the Federal edifice, which he had contributed in protecting so

* On account of the violent dissensions between the deputies and the ministry, the King had resolved, in May 1863, to control affairs *outside* the constitution and of governing *without* a parliament, and Herr von Bismarck, the ingenious author of this unconstitutional measure, was in consequence the *bête noire* of the opposition headed by Herr von Forkenbeck, to whom he offered lately (in 1877) a portfolio.

† "*den wahnsinnigen Vorschlag*" (Baron Beust's *ipsissima verba*).

‡ "*Rumpfdirectorium.*"

long against Prussian and Austrian mines and countermines.

In the Danish question, which was the beginning of the end, the Baron took personally, as well as through the Saxon agents at Frankfort and the different German and foreign Courts, a most active part; he adopted from the first a rather favourable view of the claims of the Duke of Augustenburg, and he felt in no way inclined to accept the provisions of the London protocol of 1852 as binding for Germany, disputing the right of non-German Powers to regulate purely Federal matters by an arbitrary stroke of the pen, and that without even consulting the Diet. It left no doubt in his mind that the query of the succession in the Duchies would be the touchstone for politicians and diplomatists, and his unabated attention was directed towards this sore point on the map of Europe. Feeling instinctively that Germany's future depended upon an equitable settlement of a question affecting so materially her interests, her dignity, and her interior peace and welfare, and foreseeing the endless complications which a one-sided solution would provoke, he did not underrate the dangers of either a separate action of the great German Powers, or of any step taken by the Diet without the concurrence of the two leading members.

As the spokesman of the German Confederation at the Conference of London it became his duty to proclaim the Duke of Augustenburg, in the name of Germany, as Duke of Schleswig-Holstein,* thus assert-

* 1864.

ing in the face of Europe the firm determination of the *Bund* not to yield to any foreign pressure in matters which the august assembly considered as exclusively German and Federal.

But even long before 1864 the Baron had repeatedly broken lances for the undoubted right of Germany to manage her own affairs, and the diplomatic correspondence of the preceding years contains many proofs of his patriotic penmanship, of which there are unfortunately a certain number amongst the papers of our own Foreign Office, from the days when the late Earl Russell—then Lord John Russell—was pocketing dressing after dressing for the unjustifiable way in which he attempted "to bully" the minor States through his agents at the various German Courts: a policy "of meddling and muddling," as it was called by Lord Derby, a paltry and bickering polemic, beneath the dignity of Great Britain, and which was weakening the weight which our voice should have at all times in Europe. Barking without the faintest intention of backing up his opinions in earnest was one of Lord John's weaknesses in his relations abroad, and one is amazed to think that a man who stands unrivalled in his home policy, and to whom we owe some of the greatest reforms of the age, could be so utterly void of dignity, foresight, and great conceptions in the handling of foreign affairs. I fully agree with the January number of the *Quarterly Review* of 1864, which accuses him of only trying his martial ardour with States unable to defend themselves, and of collecting rebuffs from any

one not inclined to stand nonsense, and I doubt if ever a minister of a great Power has been more severely handled—the French would say *aplati*—than Lord John was at the time by Baron Beust, who replied *brevi manu* to Mr. Murray's communication of the 5th of January, 1864, that Lord John's offensive language "equalled the levity of his assertions, that his total ignorance of what was going on in Germany was coupled with threats no one feared, and that, in short, Federal matters were not his business." A clear but curt *façon de non recevoir*, not complimentary, but for Earl Russell only a diplomatic "flea-bite," when we look at the collection of similar documents with which he has enriched the archives of our Foreign Office, regardless for the great and glorious traditions of the past, of proud days when no foreign cabinet would have dared to indulge in such offensive language to a minister at the head of our foreign affairs.

Returning to Baron Beust, I need not say that if he was zealous to guard Germany against foreign tutelage, he was equally anxious not to let the rights of the Diet and of the minor States be absorbed by Austria or Prussia, and when the Federal execution was voted he strenuously opposed a simultaneous military action of the two leading Powers, as such a step was necessarily diverting the contemplated proceedings against a recalcitrant member of the Diet, of its Federal and legal character, moreover creating a precedent for the possible interference of others, the moment Austria and Prussia were acting *qua*

Great Powers, instead of confining themselves to their Federal obligations.

His almost unanimous* nomination as representative of the *Bund* at the Conferences of London in April 1864, the natural result of his untiring efforts to bring about an understanding, gave him another and last opportunity for fighting the battle of the Confederation in the most eloquent manner; but I fear he must not keep a very pleasant recollection of the somewhat cool reception—much remarked and commented at the time—which he found in the hospitable *salons* of Cambridge House, as Lord Palmerston, whose sympathies were naturally all with Denmark, could and would not disguise his marked dissatisfaction with the Germans in the matter, considering rightly the Baron not only as the mouthpiece, but as the soul of the Federal policy, for both Count Apponyi and Bernstorff kept studiously in the background.

On the 1st of May, 1864, Lord Palmerston said to Count Apponyi: "We have from the beginning taken a deep interest in favour of Denmark; not from family ties, which have little influence on English policy, but first, that we have thought from the beginning that Denmark had been harshly and unjustly treated; and, secondly, we deem the integrity and independence of the State, which commands the entrance to the Baltic, objects of interest to Eng-

* The Baron was elected by thirteen out of seventeen voices (Saxony naturally abstaining), and the enthusiasm with which his nomination was received throughout Germany speaks best for the popularity of the choice made by the Diet.

land." * How right Lord Palmerston was on the latter point is clearly shown by the recent somewhat threatening language of Prince Bismarck's press relative to the sending of our fleet to the Baltic, and there cannot well be a doubt that our interests were closely linked to the claims of Denmark, so that without looking at the abstract rights of the contending parties "selfish patriotism" ought to have stirred us in favour of Denmark; and considering Lord Palmerston's personal conviction, it is deeply to be regretted that he should not have asserted his views at the time, without even the concurrence of France and Russia, in the only way befitting our dignity and interests.

What the present Prime Minister thought on the subject is no mystery; but unfortunately the resolutions moved at the time by Lord Malmesbury and Mr. Disraeli, "that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government had lowered the just influence of this country in the councils of Europe and thereby diminished the securities for peace," were defeated by a majority of eighteen. Had power changed hands at that moment, it would have affected events in Europe considerably, and possibly it might have saved us the gigantic sacrifices which we shall have to make at no distant future, if we are to recover the lost prestige of our name in continental matters, which the pusillanimous policy of Lord John Russell put in jeopardy at a time when Lord Palmerston

* E. Ashley, vol. ii. p. 250, letter of Lord Palmerston to Lord John Russell.

was already too old "to make a notch off his own bat," as he used to say.

Events have only too well confirmed the presentiments of Mr. Disraeli and Lord Malmesbury, and the wise foresight which inspired their vote of censure. Moreover, as neither the disputed rights of the Prince of Augustenburg nor even the undisputed ones of the Diet have in any way benefited by our weakness, *au contraire,* and as alone Prussia has benefited by the plunder of Denmark, we have, I think, every reason to lament not having enforced the claims of little Denmark, and the provisions of the Protocol of 1852.

The Protocol may have been an international wrong, but it was not the less an international title, and as valid as any other created by the good pleasure of the Great Powers; at any rate it was a better title than the one by which Prussia holds the duchies at present, unless we subordinate the joint decision of Europe to the right of conquest—*au droit du plus fort.*

Unfortunately, however, Lord Palmerston seems not to have dreaded an aggrandizement of Prussia in that direction, for he wrote in September 1865, to Lord John: "It was dishonest and unjust to deprive Denmark of Schleswig and Holstein. It is another question how those two duchies, when separated from Denmark, can be disposed of best for the interests of Europe. I should say that, with that view, it is better that they should go to increase the power of Prussia, than that they should form another little State to be

added to the cluster of small bodies politic which incumber Germany . . . . Prussia is too weak as she now is ever to be honest or independent in her action . . . Germany ought to be strong in order to resist Russian aggression, and a strong Prussia is essential to German strength. Therefore, though I heartily condemn the whole of the proceedings of Austria and Prussia about the duchies, I own that I should rather see them incorporated with Prussia than converted into an additional asteroid in the system of Europe."* It is to be doubted that Lord Palmerston would say the same to-day, or that he would still think Prussia likely to assist us against Russia in case of a conflict; and I fear he has much to answer for having indirectly contributed so effectually to weaken Austria, to strengthen Prussia, and to annihilate Germany as such. However, in 1864, at the time of the Conferences, the rapid metamorphosis of Prussia into the all-absorbing military colossus of our days, could hardly be anticipated; yet, if Lord Palmerston was too old to remember, Lord John Russell ought not to have forgotten that the Great Powers had decreed Denmark's integrity "of public use" (*d'utilité publique*),† and that he himself had styled the protocol "*une loi européenne*"—a European law. On the other hand, when Baron Beust was declaring at the Conference, "that the majority of the Diet would not consent to the re-establishment of a connection

* Letter to Lord John Russell, 13th of September, 1865 (E. Ashley, vol. ii. p. 270).

† Protocol of 1852.

between Denmark and the Duchies, under whatever form it might be,"* he thought little that he too was working for Prussia, and that not Germany, but Prussia alone, would benefit by his efforts to wrench the Duchies from King Christian IX.

The abandonment of Denmark and of the Protocol of 1852, which, *entre parenthèse*, had never been ratified by the *Bund*, this final result of the Conference, will always remain a blot on the consciences of the Great Powers, and shows the value of international paper decrees.

The tide changed the moment Austria, Prussia, and the Diet took up determined -- although perfectly separate—positions, and diplomatic Europe had only a sweet smile for the bold face of three-headed Germany; the triumph was the greater for the German statesmen, as the violent dissensions at home with regard to the future of the Schleswig-Holstein *pomme de discorde* would have made it so easy for the Great Powers to intervene effectually—*Divide et impera* is an old axiom, and the division could not well be more complete.

Yet the Fatherland was in no way to benefit by this diplomatic victory, for already at the Conferences the Prussian tactics had clearly indicated her unwillingness of identifying her interests with those of Germany, at least not in the sense of the Diet, and it was a suicidal mistake that Austria did not at that moment boldly seize on the leadership Prussia was courting, and which at that moment was for the last

* Declaration, which Lord Clarendon styled "*un acte de bonne foi.*"

time in the reach of the House of Habsburg. But instead of putting himself at the head of the aspirations and wishes of the German people, Count Rechberg turned his back on them,* and making common cause with the Berlin Cabinet, he seconded Herr von Bismarck's anti-federal proceedings, which had for object to take the Danish question altogether out of the hands of the Diet, and to appropriate the Duchies *quâ* Great Powers.

It was the most lamentable error an Austrian statesman could well commit, for by gaining, in defiance of all right and justice, an acquisition in the North of Germany, as impossible to hold or defend as Flanders in the time, Austria alienated from herself the sympathies of the German people; and in putting her name to the Treaty of Gastein, which endowed each of the two Powers with a Duchy, she endorsed not only indirectly the death-warrant of the *Bund*, but at the same time her own abdication as *primus inter pares*.

When the Emperor Francis Joseph saw the fatal mistake, it was too late, and His Majesty had to pay the penalty for the unpardonable shortsightedness and levity of his advisers. The joint campaign in the Duchies had been the dress rehearsal of the fratricidal tragedy of 1866, and Königgrätz was only a natural sequel of a long series of Austrian blunders.

Baron Beust had followed with patriotic anxiety

* In 1863, annoyed at seeing his proposals rejected at Nürnberg, Count Rechberg said to one of the leading statesmen of Germany, "All right, I will show you that I can also go with Prussia," and events have shown where he went in his foolish desire "to spite" the minor States.

the development of Herr von Bismarck's Prussifying policy: delusions were not possible since Herr von Bismarck's famous despatch of January 24th, 1863, in which he claimed Hanover and Hesse for Prussia, besides the leadership of Germany as far as the Main; and although deeply grieved at seeing his repeated warnings ignored at Vienna, where Count Rechberg was handling the ribbons of the Austrian state chariot with the recklessness of a madman, the Baron determined on making a last attempt to avert the catastrophe by a closer union of the minor States: not, as he expressed himself in the Saxon Chambers, to sow dissension, not to indulge in particularistic dreams, not to separate the two great German Powers, but, on the contrary, in order to form a compact link between the two, to cement the failing unity, and to uphold a truly *German* policy against foreign influence, as well as against the mediatising propensities of Prussia.

Almost alone, at any rate only lukewarmly seconded, Baron Beust had heretofore vainly struggled to bring about an understanding amongst the members of the Confederation; but if he had not succeeded in forming the minor States into one powerful group, if his idea of a political and military trinity, with a well-balanced division of interests and power, had not been realized, he had at any rate the satisfaction that his efforts had for seventeen years been successfully baffling the Prussian endeavours to bring the Confederation to grief, and he confidently thought that the Governments of the minor States would no

longer shut their eyes to the imminent danger, and that the Cabinet of Vienna would realize the folly of the game it was playing. But Austria, who, above all, ought to have welcomed any scheme likely to stop Prussian ambition in its natural limits, could or would not forget the days when she ruled supreme in Germany, and she opposed, even in the last hour, all concessions which common sense, altered circumstances, and different times suggested as necessary in her relations with the other German Powers, and chiefly with Prussia, her undoubted equal in strength and importance.

Count Buol's portentous vanity, Herr von Schmerling's "great German feats," and Count Rechberg's utter want of judgment had completed the blundering policy which their predecessors had inaugurated at the Ballplatz, only neither of them had the superiority of a Metternich, the prestige of a Schwarzenberg, or the genius of a Kaunitz to shield their mistakes.

The *Bund* had been made a laughing-stock, instead of being allowed to become popular and to develop itself into something like a power; the odium of all mismanagement was generously taken by Austria* on her already overburdened shoulders, whilst Prussia was intriguing in the garb of a victimized *frondeur*, and hoisting a liberal pennant over her opposition shop in Frankfort, little heeding that at

* Exactly as in Italy, when Austria was credited with all the shortcomings of the various sovereigns her arms had been supporting and maintaining.

home she was more autocratic and intolerant than the much decried House of Habsburg.

All this was done *de gaieté de cœur*, the men at the helm at Vienna clinging to a phantom of past grandeur, and to a once undisputed tutelage of the minor States, without noticing that influence, prestige, power and all had passed, "bag and baggage," into the rival's camp, until the day approached when the two great German Powers stood opposite each other armed *de pied en cap* to fight the final struggle for supremacy. The part played by Saxony at this juncture was undoubtedly as dignified as it was peaceful,* and although Baron Beust alone of all German statesmen —if we except those of Prussia—had not neglected the necessary precautions in case of a Federal collision, he deserves the greatest credit for his energetic efforts to avert a fratricide conflict. It is no secret that he urged the Viennese Cabinet not to put its motion at Frankfort, relative to the "*Bundes-execution*," and it will be interesting to mention at this place, what the Baron said on the subject, about a fortnight before the lamentable outbreak of the war: "War seems unavoidable. You know that we have not entered into any separate alliance with Austria, as we are *eo ipso* bound to march. Neither international nor Federal law leaves us a choice; we must follow Austria. The Imperial Cabinet intends to move in a few days a Federal Execution against Prussia. I have warned against it, and submitted

* One of the leading German statesmen said to the author, "*Sachsens Rolle in* 1866 *war eine schöne.*"

that such a step ought to be left to the last. I shall try once more to urge the postponement of such a fatal decision; but I am sure again to preach to the dumb, just as previously when I advised to adhere to the Conferences at Paris. War can bring us no blessings, at least not at first. If Prussia is beaten, we need not delude ourselves that Saxony will become the price of barter.* If Prussia is victorious, Saxony will lose her independence." †

But if we look back upon the events preceding the Austrian motion of the 11th of June, there cannot well be a doubt that, injudicious as the step was in itself, the members of the Confederation were compelled by the provisions of the Federal Constitution to vote in its favour. Article XI. prohibiting the settlement of interior dissensions "sword in hand," what else could the Diet do but comply with Article XIX. of the *Wiener Schlussacte*, in order to prevent an infringement of the Federal Constitution, nay, the overthrow of the Federal edifices? and it has always remained a mystery to me, how England, so jealous of constitutional life and freedom, did not give her moral support to those who surely were struggling to preserve the inviolability of a constitution sanctioned by all Europe.

The Prussian preposterous demands ‡ could not leave a doubt as to the ultimate intentions; Herr von Bismarck's language was in no way ambiguous, and

* "*Ausgleichungsobject.*"

† Dr. Ebeling, vol. ii. p. 340.

‡ In March and April 1866.

even the King declared, bluntly, "that it was no longer a question of the Duchies, but a question of supremacy," and his Majesty added "that he had the mission to overthrow *Democracy* as identified with the government of Austria;" a mission which, it appears, did not exclude to fraternize with Italian radicals nor to revolutionize Hungary.*

Yet, notwithstanding the Prussian mobilization of part of her army, Baron Beust's conciliatory interference obtained another short respite. General Govone's mission to Berlin on the 14th of March had paved the way for a Prusso-Italian partnership, but the bargain was not settled yet, and the union of Venetia at that moment would have altered the aspect materially, but matters changed when the offensive and defensive alliances of the two countries were signed on April 8th. Already on the 9th, Prussia changed her tactics in Frankfort, and shortly after she summoned Austria and Saxony to disarm, Count Bismarck declaring, "that he should not allow Austria to defeat Italy," as if ever Austria had planned an aggression, which, on the contrary, the Berlin Cabinet was kindling on the other side. Count Mensdorff's somewhat irritable and irritating despatches widened the gap, yet how could he have complied with Prussia's demand of a disarmament, when Italy refused even for the price of the cession of Venetia to remain neutral? † However, his refusal

* See the Duc de Gramont's, the French Ambassador's, despatches in March 1866.

† The Austrian Cabinet offered, on May 5th, to General La Marmora, Italian Envoy at Vienna, as the price of Italy's neutrality, the cession of

to do the first step in that direction became necessarily a weapon in Herr von Bismarck's skilful hands; and well aware that, with the exception of Saxony, not one of the minor States was in a state of supporting Austria effectually,* he determined "to try the question," and dropping the Federal mask, he showed a Prussian face. The minor States had to fight for one side or the other,—an unpleasant dilemma, for it was a political "Heads, I win; and tails, you lose;" for if faithful to the Federal Constitution, it was war and nothing to gain, but much to risk; if submitting to the Prussian demands, it was a voluntary "mediatization," a voluntary Prussification of Germany.

Herr von Bismarck did not underrate the advantages of his position, and his threats to secede from the *Bund*, as well as the mobilization of the entire Prussian army, were direct challenges of the other Federal Governments; and Herr von Savigny's words,† "That peace and war were in the hands of the Emperor Francis Joseph, and possibly in those of Baron Beust,"‡ were only a diplomatic subterfuge: the Prussian Premier knew his antagonists and the

Venetia; but it was too late, and Italy declined, considering herself pledged to Prussia by the secret treaty of April 8th.

* *Post festum*, Prussia accused Hanover with having been preparing armaments, although the state of the army when the country was invaded refutes clearly those gratuitous imputations.

† Prussian Envoy at Frankfort; meeting of the Diet on May 9th.

‡ In 1866 the whole blame was laid on Baron Beust's shoulders, but when the confiscation of the King of Hanover's private property made it desirable to incriminate the latter, Count Bismarck exculpated Baron Beust, stating that Hanover had been at the head of Prussia's enemies since 1851, and that Hanover had been the first to arm in 1866—*mens conscia recti*.

certain advantages he would have in fighting this duel between might and right, now that all the trumps were in his hands. Germany not prepared, Austria between two fires, Italy unshakable in her "fealty" to the Prussian alliance, and France—well, France squared by hollow and misleading promises; for surely I should not like to do Herr von Bismarck the injustice of taking his famous declaration to Prince Frederick of Hesse and to the Envoy of the Elector, "that he had taken measures rather to give the left shores of the Rhine to France than to let Austria be victorious," * for anything else but a rhetorical or diplomatic bait—*spargere voces in vulgum ambiguas.*

It was, of course, no mystery for the Berlin Cabinet on what side Saxony and her Premier would be found, and it answered the Prussian purposes only too well that the Kings of Saxony and of Hanover considered themselves bound to remain true to the Federal pact and to their Federal obligations.

Throwing the future of Saxony in with the lot of Austria and the other members of the Confederation, Baron Beust played his *va banque*, with the conviction of doing his duty to his country and to Germany at large, and little thinking how badly he would be seconded by the South, and chiefly by Bavaria, where the pernicious influence of the Austrian agents had estranged Baron von der Pfordten, and where, moreover, the publication of Count Mensdorff's confiden-

* "*Ehe wir Oesterreich siegen lassen, sind bereits Vorkehrungen getroffen, das linke Rheinufer an Frankreich abzutreten*" (Ebeling, vol. ii. p. 314).

tial despatch to Herr von Bismarck,* in which he consented to the cession of Holstein to Prussia, provided Austria should be indemnified elsewhere, had roused a reasonable distrust against the good faith of Austria—suspicion which proved fatal in the hour of need, as the events of 1866 have shown.

Baron Beust's hopes in a "German" future, and the incessant labours of a quarter of a century, were buried at Sadowa. Austria was beaten, broken, shattered; the Confederation was no more; and Herr von Bismarck, dazzled and surprised by a success which far surpassed his most sanguine expectations, found himself sole master of the situation.

Hanover, Hesse, and Nassau disappeared from the map, whilst the other Sovereigns were allowed to retain a kind of sham independence, Herr von Bismarck treating them somewhat like the Dyke-captain (*Deichhauptmann*) near Schönhausen, whom he threatened with dismissal unless he accepted a partnership which assigned to Herr von Bismarck the duties and the work, and to him the title, honours, and pay.

The present junior members of the German firm were exactly in the same position as the poor Dyke-captain—they had no choice, and, warned by the terrible fate of His Majesty the King of Hanover, and of the other Sovereigns who had justly resisted the encroaching tutelage of Prussia, the unfortunate Princes, the Kings of Bavaria, Saxony, and Würtemberg at their head, had even to be thankful for being

* 21st Dec. 1864.

taken in (*sans jeu de mots*) as sleeping partners. They kept their titles, honours, pay, and Prussia, in taking the management of the new co-operative concern, had the politeness to maintain the ancient name of the firm—what more could they expect? The Royal and Ducal Dyke-captains had to be happy *malgré eux.*

Accompanying his King after the occupation of Saxony by Prussian troops, Baron Beust witnessed, in the memorable night after Königgrätz, the mournful meeting of the Emperor and King John at the station in Vienna*—a long and mute embrace of the two so cruelly tried Sovereigns, expressing better than words their own despair and the sorrowing feelings of their people.

Called from the first to take an active part in the empty negociations for an armistice, Baron Beust was desired by the Emperor of Austria to go to Paris, and with his King's consent the Saxon Premier undertook the delicate mission of urging the Emperor Napoleon to a military demonstration. But he came too late; quicker than the Austrian monarch, Herr von Bismarck had already despatched Prince Reuss† to Paris, where, availing himself of M. de Lavalette's influence, the Prussian statesman had obtained the Emperor's consent to the metamorphosis of the German map. Baron Beust arrived after Prussia had won a second Sadowa at Paris; the Emperor was annoyed at the turn things had taken,

* 4th July, 1866.

† The late Prussian Ambassador at Constantinople, for many years First Secretary at Paris, and at present Ambassador at Vienna.

yet, suffering physically, he had only one stereotyped answer to the joint entreaties of M. Drouyn de Lhuys and Baron Beust, "*Je ne suis pas prêt.*"

Napoleon III. had made the Italian Unity by drawing the sword, and he was now to Prussify Germany by leaving it in the scabbard.

A mere diversion on the Rhine, as Baron Beust had suggested, would have stopped the advance of King William, who could not leave Berlin exposed; and without firing a shot the Emperor would have influenced events, as it would have given Austria time to bring her victorious armies up from Italy.

But be it that the Emperor was really too ill to take a great decision, be it that His Majesty was speculating on the imaginary compensations with which M. Benedetti had been filling his mind, the fact is that he sacrificed Austria a second time, unconscious that he was thus preparing his own ruin, and that a few years later the same irresistible northern breeze would blow down Imperial France. Sadowa was the prelude of Sedan.

All Baron Beust could obtain for Austria was the promise of the Emperor's "good offices" for making the conditions of peace "*acceptable.*" He was, however, more successful with respect to Saxony, and he had the proud satisfaction of saving Saxony from the fate of Hanover, Hesse, and Nassau.* Napoleon III. could not forget what Saxony had suffered for

* Preferring life *à tout prix*, to nobly burying herself under the ruins of the *Bund*, whom she had driven to draw the sword for Austro-German rights and existence, Austria left her allies to their fate, and bought peace by turning her back upon those she had *ruined*.

Napoleon I., and His Majesty remembered that Saxony had been the first Power to recognise him as Emperor; and as even the smallest incidents have often a great bearing in after days,* he remembered that King John had been the first Sovereign who had sent him a decoration, the *Rauten-Orden*, of which Napoleon I. had been the first Knight.† This mission was the last, and surely the most important service rendered to his country in a well-filled career of many years. His dismissal was the *conditio sine quâ non* of peace with Saxony; and King John's farewell letter to his trusted adviser and friend will remain the most precious acknowledgment of his devotion to Saxony and to his Sovereign, the value of the letter being greatly enhanced by His Majesty's noble courage in having it published at a moment when he was, so to say, still at the mercy of Prussia; it was an act which does the late King everlasting honour,‡ and makes the following autographical lines a rare monument of royal gratitude :—

(*Translation.*)

"DEAR MINISTER, BARON BEUST,

"I received last night your resignation, and I see in the motives which induced you to tender

* Thus it had never been forgotten at the Tuileries that, with the exception of the Czar, the King of Hanover had been the last to recognise the Empire, and that, until the meeting at Baden, His Majesty declined to give Hanoverian decorations to French diplomatists.

† The Emperor said to Baron Beust: "*Vous avez été contre nous en* 1855, MAIS VOUS AVEZ ÉTÉ BIEN POUR MOI DANS UNE CERTAINE CIRCONSTANCE; *je ne l'ai pas oublié; vous pouvez dire au Roi que je lui promets de sauver la Saxe.*"

‡ Sent in 1874 to represent the Emperor of Austria at the funeral of

it the same sentiments of faithful devotion to your King and country of which you have given such constant proofs during your tenure of office.

"I need not tell you how painful the idea is of a separation from you. You have been at my side in good and in bad days since my accession, and daily you have given me opportunities for appreciating your eminent qualifications as a statesman, your activity and your unshaken attachment.

"Your advice has always been conscientious, well weighed, and not inspired by sympathies or antipathies, but alone by circumstances, and it has proved advantageous after an experience of many years. We always quickly agreed, even in the most vital questions. . . . . To see such a happy and tried connection severed must naturally affect me much, and if I consent to accept your resignation it is solely for the important political reasons you have put forward, and which require the sacrifice of my personal wishes and feelings for the good of my country; and I beg you to believe in the assurances of my gratitude for the important services you have rendered to myself and to my late brother, and to be certain that my sentiments of cordial goodwill and of sincere esteem for your person will, even under altered circumstances, remain ineffaceably the same. With the

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King John, his Majesty King Albert endorsed his royal father's letter and gratitude in the most affectionate and flattering terms, telling the Baron that up to his death the King had constantly lamented the loss of his faithful minister.

highest consideration and the truest affection, I am, dear Minister of State, Baron Beust, your most devoted "JOHN.

"Schönbrunn, August 16, 1866."

On October 30, 1866, about two months after the preceding letter of H. M. the King of Saxony, Baron Beust was gazetted as Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs.* It was by no means a novel idea of his Imperial Majesty, for if we are to believe the rumours which found their way from the Hofburg into the press, his Majesty had already contemplated something of the kind as far back as 1852, after Prince Schwarzenberg's death, when, however, a premature communication from Count Nesselrode prevented the execution of this Imperial idea. Then again, at the time of the *Fürstentag* at Frankfort, in 1863; and also in 1864, when Count Rechberg retired; and a fourth time, at the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian war, when Count Mensdorff entreated the Emperor to relieve him from a burden he considered too heavy for a soldier's shoulders.† The Baron's retirement from

* The Emperor having appointed Baron Beust already in August, his nomination was kept secret for two months, on account of the negociations between Prussia and Saxony; and so great was the animosity against the Baron in Prussia, that when he invited his family to meet him at Teschen, he was warned not to venture too near the frontier, as the Prussian troops would not scruple to fetch him over and to lodge him in a fortress.

† His Majesty King Albert of Saxony told a friend of the author, that his royal father had repeatedly thought of Baron Beust's appointment in Austria, and that his late Majesty used laughingly to say, "I only wish I could lend him out occasionally" (*"Ich wollte, ich könnte ihn bisweilen ausleihen"*).

the Saxon Premiership having been imposed on King John by the conqueror, his appointment in Austria looked naturally at first like a sort of anti-Prussian demonstration; but such was not the case, and the Emperor Francis Joseph was too well aware of his new Minister's conciliatory disposition to allow himself to be deterred by the defiant aspect of the nomination.

The Baron's religion and nationality seemed in the eyes of a certain coterie insuperable obstacles; yet public opinion being saturated with a craving for a thorough change, the vast majority of the people hailed the Imperial decision with undisguised satisfaction, and the advent of the eminent Saxon statesman appeared like a ray of hope in the night of pessimistic despair. A mournful curtain had dropped upon one of the saddest pages in the history of the House of Habsburg: a new era was to begin, and was welcomed by all patriots, with a cheerful abnegation of self, all agreeing that Baron Beust was the very man to rouse Austria from her state of exhaustion and disorganization.*

Notwithstanding her glorious victories in Italy, her power was broken, her prestige was gone, her armies were annihilated or discouraged, her administration was in utter confusion, her exchequer empty, and without friends or allies, expulsed from Germany, divided in the interior, disheartened, hopeless, helpless, the Austrian Empire presented a sad spectacle of fallen greatness. Yet encouraged by an

* "*Verwahrlosung*" would be a better word for expressing the idea.

implicit faith in the elevated views of his chivalrous Sovereign, whom misfortune had found every inch a Habsburg, a prince, and a man, the Baron hesitated not to undertake the gigantic task of regeneration, and that notwithstanding the defective inventory left him by his predecessors; for he was convinced that the elasticity and the dormant resources of the realm would soon allow him to infuse new life into the stagnant machinery, if he had *carte blanche* to treat the patient in his own way. For this he had the sanction of his Imperial Master; nor was the patriotic enthusiasm of the people to fail him; and although at first only entrusted with the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, public opinion designated him at once as the future leader.

The German liberal element looked forward to a better future under his guidance, the Hungarians greeted in him constitutional hopes, and the other parties effaced themselves in the beginning, in order not to impede the necessary re-organization of all services.

The dismissal of Counts Mensdorff and Moritz Esterhazy, although naturally indisposing some of the great families, was the consequence of a popular cry for new men and new ideas. To be saved, the country wanted a skilful doctor and efficient remedies; and the Baron was looked upon as offering all guarantees for a speedy return to constitutionalism on both sides of the Leitha.

The only liberal statesman Germany could boast of, the warmest champion of freedom and constitu-

tional ideas and institutions, no one doubted that the Baron would put into practice in Austria the theories which he had been advocating as Saxon Premier; and it hardly required the assurances of his first circular * to be certain that he would insist upon the fullest political, religious, and economical liberty, which alone could bring forth the metamorphosis on which the future of the Monarchy was dependent.

The Magyars were particularly dissatisfied, and they loudly demanded home rule, restitution of the Constitution of 1848, and an independent Cabinet; some negociations had been opened by Count Belcredi, without any other result but half-measures—paper decrees from Vienna, and irritating resolutions in Pesth. An understanding became, therefore, so vital a question that even Count Leo Thun, the leader of the high Tories, was obliged to admit its necessity; and in December His Majesty requested Baron Beust to see Deák. On his return from Pesth, the Baron advised the Emperor to summon Eötvös, Lonyai, Maylath, and Andrassy to Vienna; and in January a preliminary understanding was agreed upon, notwithstanding the chief difficulty presented by the financial side of the question, as the demands of Hungary were perfectly incompatible with an equitable repartition of the burdens.

His Majesty having signed the decree for the autonomy of Hungary, the German Liberals accepted at Aussee with enthusiasm a programme in which they saw a step towards parliamentary life at home,

* Circular of Oct. 30, 1866.

as it was evident that the *Erblande* could not well remain deprived of advantages enjoyed by the other half of the realm; but the Premier, Count Belcredi, imagined to paralyse the Hungarian ascendency by means of a Slavonic majority, and he therefore called an extraordinary *Reichstag*, where he was certain of a preponderant Federalistic element, and he insisted upon submitting the arrangements with Hungary to the Provincial Diets, in accordance with his pledge of September 1865, not to treat with Hungary without the concurrence of the other parts of the Monarchy, and on whose *veto* he knew he could rely.

Baron Beust opposed strenuously this idea, as unfair to Hungary and unfortunate in its tendency; and he insisted upon the calling of a constitutional *Reichstag*, the more as he was unable to defend his policy against the violent attacks in the seventeen separate assemblies, to which he had no access. As anticipated, he found little else but tacit approval from the other members of the Cabinet; and seeing the differences between him and the Premier widening daily, so that the retirement of one became a necessity, he doubted not that Count Belcredi would carry the day, and that his own career in Austria was as good as terminated; for, eminently gifted, and pleading his cause most ably, the Count was not only fighting the battle on well-known ground, but he was also supported by a powerful fraction at Court, and in the Imperial surroundings.

It was therefore somewhat unexpected by Baron Beust when an autograph letter of the Emperor

appointed him, on the 7th of February, Prime Minister, President of the Council, Minister of State, and Minister of Police, in addition to his being Minister of Foreign Affairs, moreover entrusting him also temporarily with the *portefeuilles* of the Interior and of Public Worship and Instruction. But from the moment that his Majesty chose the Baron —perhaps *à contre cœur*—it must be said that every facility was given him by his Imperial Master for carrying out his programme. His first step was to redeem the promises to Hungary; and hardly ten days after Count Belcredi's retirement, Count Andrassy received, on Baron Beust's proposal, the Emperor's commands for the formation of a Hungarian Cabinet—a choice which speaks loudly for his Majesty's high-minded self-abnegation; for, involved with Count Louis Batthiany in the insurrection of 1848, Count Andrassy had been sentenced to death for high treason, and even been hung in effigy.*

Twenty-four hours after the Imperial decree conferring upon Hungary the restitution of her full parliamentary rights, a constitutional *Reichstag* was summoned for Austria proper, to consider the following important points: modification of Constitution, responsibility of the Cabinet, automatic government for all kingdoms and provinces, revision of the judicial procedure, and re-organization of the national defence.

* On hearing of the Count's appointment, Count Alexander Erdödy remarked, that there was this difference between the two Hungarian patriots, "that Batthiany had been hung after being Hungarian Minister, and Andrassy before being so."

A few weeks had sufficed to Baron Beust for realizing, not only a compromise with Hungary, but for endowing both parts of the Monarchy with constitutional institutions, and now he could devote all his energies to a reconstitution of the administrative chaos, and of Austria's lost prestige in foreign policy.

The coronation of the Emperor at Ofen was a welcome opportunity for the Hungarians to express their gratitude to the most popular "Austrian" statesman who ever set foot on Hungarian soil. Endless were the ovations; and next to the Emperor and King, the Baron was the hero of the day, which made His Majesty say that no Austrian minister had ever met with such a reception in Hungary; and I remember well the enthusiastic *eljens* which greeted the Baron wherever he appeared,* and I feel sure that those days must be amongst the proudest recollections of his long and exalted career.

The Emperor was not long in rewarding the merits of his *adlatus*, for a fortnight after the coronation His Majesty conferred upon Baron Beust the dignity of Imperial Chancellor, which had only been held twice before him—by Prince Kaunitz and the late Prince Metternich; and in the following year a most gracious autograph letter created the Baron an hereditary Count of the Empire.

* The Hungarians called Baron Beust, *Voter unseriger*—our father—and I cannot resist mentioning the following amusing incident at a ball given by the nobility. Alighting from his carriage, he was received by a bevy of lovely Hungarian ladies, when an old nobleman, kneeling down, greeted him with the usual words, "*Voter unseriger;*" but the Baron, taking him by the hand, said laughingly, "*Muss ich noch Vater von dem Greis sein?*"

But although evidently high in favour, and virtually master of the situation, the Count had yet to overcome a thousand difficulties, and not the least was the question of the Concordat, where principles had to be brought in harmony with the lessons of the past—a delicate problem, and the more difficult to solve for the Baron, as he is a Protestant. But notwithstanding the opposition of the advanced Liberals on one side, and the intrigues and protestations of the Ultramontanes, with twenty-five Austrian Bishops at their head, on the other, he succeeded in carrying the day, and that without a much dreaded rupture of diplomatic relations with the Holy See, a result which may well be called a *tour de force* of diplomatic tact and *savoir-faire*; for one must bear in mind that the Pope was in those days not only master in Rome, but his Holiness had France, Spain, and the largest part of Austria with and behind him.

Having thus pacified Rome and reconciled Hungary—having endowed Austria with a Constitution,* and inaugurated parliamentary life on the 1st of January, 1868—having reorganized all interior services—and having carefully sketched out the new duties of his colleagues, the Baron could at last devote his attention more to foreign politics, retaining, after the nomination of the cis-Leithanian Cabinet, only the portfolio of Foreign Affairs of Austro-Hungary.

His chief pre-occupation was to bury all ideas of rancour and revenge, to proclaim a policy of for-

* The Constitution was proclaimed in the last days of December 1867.

getting—if I may say so, of forgiveness—and to lay down as the leading rule what Lord Beaconsfield christened lately, in his Guildhall speech of the 9th of November, 1877, so appropriately, "selfish patriotism," i.e. a utilization of the national resources and energies for none other but the country's own interests. Thus, throughout the five years he was at the head of Austro-Hungarian affairs, all his actions and negotiations were animated by this one desire, and all his despatches re-echoed this conciliatory spirit, which made him say in his first circular note of the 1st of November, 1866, "I bring neither sympathies nor antipathies, but experiences alone, into my new office."

His first act was to cast a veil over Queretaro and the poor Emperor Maximilian's political murder, to forget Napoleon's anti-Austrian policy in Italy, and to seek a close alliance with France. The cession of Venetia, and the renouncing of the House of Habsburg to all present and future claims of Italy, did their part; and the Emperor Francis Joseph's visit to the Paris Exhibition, which was alone Baron Beust's work, as his Imperial Master hated the idea, completed the good understanding; and all those who were present will remember how radiant with pleasure and self-satisfaction Napoleon III. looked when he embraced the Austrian Monarch at the Gare du Nord, whilst the people seemed fascinated by the winning and chivalrous appearance of his Apostolic Majesty, whose reception contrasted much with the rather cool one given to the King of Prussia and Count

Bismarck, although the Emperor himself was personally full of attentions for both.*

But whilst the Chancellor leaned towards France as the natural Continental ally of the Habsburg Monarchy, and one whose alliance he believed indispensable to Austria in the East, he worked also incessantly at strengthening the somewhat platonic friendship of Great Britain. And true to the principles of Free Trade which he professed as Prime Minister of Saxony, it was to his efforts that we owe the ratification of our commercial treaty with Austria, and particularly the Supplementary Appendix. Moreover, having one eye anxiously fixed towards the East, he undervalued not the importance of an understanding with us on a question so vital for the Habsburg Monarchy, on account of her geographical position, and the similarity of race, religion, and interests in some of her border provinces with the Slavonic elements of the Ottoman Empire.

It was clear to him that the independence and the national development of the countries on the southern Danube, that the progressive and regulated process of Eastern civilization could not be stopped, but ought on the contrary be turned to account by the

* And here I cannot resist mentioning a little incident of this visit, which proves at all events how far a possible conflict with Prussia was from the Emperor's mind. The King of Prussia dining one day *en famille* at St. Cloud, the Emperor happened to hand some salt to his guest, when King William threw a few grains of salt over his shoulder before helping himself, explaining to Napoleon III. that, according to an old German belief, this would prevent their ever quarrelling; to which the Emperor replied laughingly, "*Croyez-vous que nous avions besoin de cela pour consolider notre amitié?*"

Western Powers as the best guarantee against certain emergencies. To remain deaf to the just complaints of the Principalities, and of the Christian subjects of the Porte, was in his eyes a serious mistake, as it was certain to throw them into Russia's arms, thus preparing with the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, *par ricochet*, a similar fate for the already mutilated Monarchy of the Habsburgs.

On the other hand, he did not overlook the difficulties of steering clear of the hereditary antagonism of the Magyars and Slavs, and the budding ambition of the Poles, and he endeavoured to counterbalance as far as possible the divergent tendencies of the various races composing the Empire with the natural aspirations and hopes of all concerned, taking as motto "*une indépendance égale dans toutes les directions.*"

The compromise between Austria and Hungary, with which Count Beust had inaugurated his tenure of office, though strongly conciliating the griefs of the past as far as the House of Habsburg was concerned, had in no way modified the antagonism between Magyars and Slavs, the former always considering themselves as somewhat superior beings, and looking upon the latter as a sort of political outlaws.

To understand this anomalous state of things, it is well to remember the origin of the Slavonic provinces of Austria, which, with the exception of Croatia, are more artificial agglomerations than remnants of original nationalities. Having had to protect Hungary and their German dominions for

more than three centuries against barbarous aggression, the Habsburgs quartered German troops on the borders of Croatia and Styria, thus encircling the civilized world with a girdle of bayonets. The founder of this system, the Emperor Ferdinand, brother of Charles V., christened his new creation the "Military Frontier" (*die Militärgrenze*), endowing the same with all sorts of privileges in exchange of the perilous and arduous duties. In the course of time the imported colony was reinforced by numerous fugitives from Servia, Albania, Macedonia, Wallachia, in fact from all the Christian provinces of the Ottoman Empire, all seeking refuge on Austrian soil from the tyranny of the Mahometan oppressor. Moreover, the line of frontier extended itself considerably, and forming a living wall between Transylvania, Hungary, Germany, Europe on one side, and the Turk on the other, it rendered signal services, and is a practical illustration of the benefits of Christian civilization when we compare the order and security enjoyed in this refuge of the oppressed with the never-ending disturbances and convulsions in the neighbouring provinces of Turkey.

But whilst the founders only contemplated "a military frontier" in the true acceptance of the word, the increased immigration of refugees from the adjoining borderlands has necessarily changed the primary character of the institution. Servia, Wallachia, Bosnia, Croatia, &c., had given it the stamp of their nationality, so that one might well say there were now two Servias, two Wallachias, &c., one the vassal of Turkey,

the other a creation of the Habsburgs, linked together by a community of religion, blood, and interest, which demands serious consideration now that the question of nationalities has been started so successfully in Italy, Germany, and even in Hungary, by a return to her time-honoured autonomy.

Accustomed to look upon the "Military Frontier," on Croatia, Slavonia, and *tutti quanti*, as a human shield given by nature for the greater glory of the Hungarian Fatherland, a genuine Magyar cannot conceive how these mute sufferers dare to wake up to national life after centuries of Nihilism; blessed with an exaggerated patriotism at home, the Hungarians do not admit that less privileged nationalities should indulge in similar feelings, and they strenuously oppose every move for utilising the additional strength which the Monarchy would reap from a sound development of the solidarity of its component parts, and from an amalgamation of mutual interests.

Baron Beust saw the necessity of leading Panslavism into a channel useful to the community; he did not wish to estrange the Slavonic races by opposing their attempts for uniting under one sceptre, or at least under the protection of the Habsburgs, for that would have been throwing them into the arms of the first power disposed to recognize their right to a national existence and future; he therefore directed his efforts towards regulating their legitimate aspirations in a direction beneficial to all concerned; to act otherwise would have been ignoring the requirements of the time and the laws of nature, which

teach us that all races pine to free themselves from a subordinate position the moment a higher civilization and the contact with more privileged neighbours have roused them from lethargic indifference, have raised the standard of their own value, and have given them a foretaste of national freedom.

It was clear to him that an empire composed of an agglomeration of such heterogeneous elements as Austria could only keep together either by an iron centralisation, autocratic rule, and an utter disdain for all national "retail" feelings, for self-government and freedom, or else by a wise subdivision of duties and rights, and by an impartial acknowledgment of a free, autonomous, and national development of the various races in the limits of constitutional life.

The former course having alienated the Italian provinces from the sway of the Habsburgs, having likewise originated the Hungarian insurrection, and having led to a general discontent throughout the realm, Baron Beust had inaugurated the latter course by the compromise with Hungary; but the satisfaction given to Hungary's legitimate claims and rights had naturally a contagious influence on the other parts of the Empire. The proclamation of a Constitution on the other side of the Leitha had been the unavoidable consequence, and was the second step in the right direction fathered by the Baron. But when he had consented to shift the centre of gravity of the Monarchy entrusted to his care in a more Eastern direction, he had in no way contemplated a disruption of the Empire; and later

on we shall see how he bridled Polish exuberance, how he checked the Czechish movement in the bud, how he stopped the federalistic experiments of some of his colleagues with a high hand, and how he purchased ultimately by his own fall the interior safety of the Monarchy.

For those who believe in the *raison d'être* of a Czechish nationality, and those who hope in a re-establishment of Poland, this may appear to some degree inconsistent with the Baron's national policy in Hungary. But then it will be well remembered that Bohemia has no traditional ties outside the Empire; that she enjoys national and constitutional freedom in the same degree as the Emperor's other provinces; that she has been amalgamated with the Austrian Monarchy as an inherent part of the realm for more than two centuries; and that, unlike the Hungarians, who had suffered for their Constitution, the Bohemians had done nothing of the kind, but had managed to creep everywhere into the best places—whilst it must also be kept in mind that the agitation for an autonomy of Galicia, Lodomeria, and Cracow was unconstitutional, was a blow at the integrity of the Empire, a danger at home and a threat abroad, at least to Russia and Prussia,* who, as the chief accomplices in the lamentable partition of Poland, had a direct interest in the *statu quo.*

* And here it may be of interest to mention that in one of his extra-communicative fits Prince Bismarck told a friend of the author that Russia had offered him Poland over and over again, but that he had refused to enrich his master with such a questionable holding.

The demands of the Diet of Galicia were preposterous, and not only did Count Beust take upon himself to discourage them from the first, but he urged his Majesty to show his displeasure by abandoning a proposed visit to his Polish dominions.

But if the Count opposed Czechism and Polish self-government, as endangering the existence of the realm, he viewed Panslavism with a still greater diffidence. Yet aware that a strong current of national feeling was indicating the natural process of gravitation towards a common centre, that these tendencies were encouraged by the Government of the Czar, and that the unsettled state of affairs in the East could at any moment give rise to serious complications in that direction, he had to consider if he would let Russia extend her protectorate, or if he would claim for Austria the leading voice in Slavonic matters.

He chose the latter course, and when the interior peace of the Empire was threatened by Panslavonic agitation in Servia, the Baron averted the impending danger by a quick and well calculated interference. Taking the initiative, he obtained not only the evacuation of Belgrade by the Turkish troops, but likewise from the Porte the recognition of the hereditary dignity of Prince of Servia for the Obrenovitch family, notwithstanding the Russian desire of seeing it pass to the Prince of Montenegro: two results which secured for Austria, at least temporarily, the gratitude of the Slavonic populations, which Prince Gortschakoff had so much at heart to monopolize for

his Imperial master, and which did not contribute to better the strained relations between the cabinets of St. Petersburg and Vienna.

The Russian statesmen could not forget Austria's ill-advised and suicidal policy during the Crimean War, which had neither satisfied the Allies nor Russia;* moreover, Russia's national vanity was still smarting under Count Buol's gratuitous importation of certain hard conditions into the Treaty of Paris relative to the regulation of her new frontiers on the Pruth, which had not even been intended by the Allies. Count Beust was therefore anxious to reconcile Russia at the first opportunity; and when the insurrection in Candia broke out, he proposed a revision of the Treaty of Paris, "*en faisant la part large à la Russie*," convinced that the absurd Article IX. of the Treaty of Paris could not stand, as the interior questions in Turkey required the united interference and supervision of Europe. He gave warning in time, and he considered it moreover vital for the peaceful development of affairs that Russia should not have reasons for complaining of any unnatural restraint.†

The epitaph‡ of the Treaty of Paris had been concocted by Prince Gortschakoff on the morrow of Sadowa, when the Russian Chancellor's circular informed Europe that "*Notre auguste maître n'a pas l'intention d'insister sur les engagements généraux de*

* In his anger at Austria's ingratitude, in 1855–56, Prince Gortschakoff exclaimed at the time: "*Ce n'est pas un état, ce n'est qu'un gouvernement.*"

† "*widernatürliche Beschränkungen*," as he called it.

‡ Klazko, 'Les Deux Chancelliers.'

traités qui n'avaient de valeur, qu'en raison de l'accord existant entre les grandes puissances pour les faire respecter, et qui aujourd'hui ont reçu, par le manque de cette volonté *collective, des atteintes trop fréquentes et trop graves pour ne pas être invalidés.*"

That Count Beust wished to revive this "collective will," and that he wanted to make the population of the Sultan "*les obligés de l'Europe*," not of Russia alone, is clearly shown by the following extract from his famous despatch of January 1st, 1867—

"*Tout en rendant justice aux motifs qui, à cette époque* [Treaty of Paris], *ont dicté les déterminations de l'Europe, on ne saurait se dissimuler que c'est aller contre la nature des choses que d'interdire à un État de l'étendue, et d'une population aussi immense sa liberté d'allures dans le cercle de son action légitime. Une pareille interdiction était peu propre à détourner à la longue les complications que l'on avait à cœur d'éviter. Toute compression excessive a pour effet de provoquer l'expansion de la force comprimée dans une autre direction, et de toute manière, en agissant comme on l'a fait, on a rendu difficile au gouvernement russe de prendre, de bon cœur, sa position dans le concert européen nouvellement établi pour les affaires d'Orient.*

"*Autant qu'il s'agit donc des restrictions dont nous venons de parler, il importe de distinguer ce qui est possible de ce qui ne l'est pas.*

"*A notre avis, il y a lieu de tenir compte, dans une mesure convenable, du rôle naturel qui assure à la Russie en Orient la communauté des institutions religieuses, et*

de se ménager, par une attitude conciliante, le concours sincère de cette puissance dans les affaires du Levant."

But the Chancellor's impulse came *mal à propos*, for, less perspicacious, Napoleon III. would not listen to a programme which intended boldly to grapple with the difficulties, and his Majesty seemed desirous to limit his interference to the question of Crete proper, proposing to give the island in dower to the Grand Duchess Olga Constantinovna, and although Russia seemed not hot on adding eventually also Epirus and Thessaly, this solution received the *valet* of all Great Powers *minus* England; nay, the Marquis de Moustier went even so far as to speak of "*des remèdes héroïques*," but all ended in smoke, and the result fell rather short of the programme suggested by the Baron, and which might have saved us many, if not all the anxieties of the present crisis, had Europe interfered "collectively" in those days.

Yet if the Baron's friendly intentions in that direction had done something towards conciliating the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, his liberal policy in Galicia —though little appreciated there when we remember the resolutions of the 24th of September, 1868, in the Diet at Cracow—and his open sympathies for the Poles counterbalanced soon the good effect of the former, and brought forth a perfect shower of bitter recriminations from Prince Gortschakoff's fertile pen; without, however, having the result of bringing the Austrian statesman "to Canossa," as Prince Bismarck playfully calls the eating of humble-pie in politics.

Count Beust declared in very plain language to the irate Russian Chancellor "that he would not allow foreign Powers to interfere in the internal affairs of the Austrian Monarchy, and least of all Russia, who had been in the habit of encouraging and fanning the discontent of the Slavs in the dominions of all her neighbours"; and it was only in 1869 that a personal interview of the two Chancellors re-established a more friendly diplomatic intercourse between the two Cabinets.

The unreserved and even cordial relations with Italy were much due to the conciliatory policy of both Count Beust and General Menabrea, the latter doing his best for smoothing whatever could hurt the susceptibility of the Austrian nation in the execution of the stipulations of 1866, whilst the former worked incessantly at replacing the old antagonism by the most friendly understanding between the two Powers.* Convinced that, absorbed by their interior reorganization, both countries had naturally the same interest in guarding against the dangers of European conflicts, he felt the necessity of cementing pacific ideas, which alone would secure the aim common to both, and we find the essence of his line of conduct embodied in what he wrote on the 19th of April, 1869, to Baron Kübeck, the Austrian Ambassador at Florence, when he said: "*Depuis que la paix a rétabli les rapports si longtemps interrompus entre les cours de*

* "*Accord intime*," which took a decidedly practical form in the Roman Question, and the pressure used by Count Beust in the Tuileries for the recall of the French troops.

Vienne et de Florence, tous mes soins se sont appliqués à effacer la trace des anciens dissentiments, et à prouver que nous acceptions loyalement, sans la moindre arrière-pensée de rancune, la position que les événements nous avaient faite."

Had Count Beust been fifteen years earlier at the head of Austrian affairs, much blood, tears, and humiliations might have been spared, and there is little doubt that he would either have preserved the Italian dominions, by supporting the liberal *régime* of the Archduke Maximilian—the greatest enemy, as Count Cavour used to say, of the Italian unity, on account of the good government enjoyed by the Lombardo-Venetian provinces under his management—or else he would have come in time to terms with Victor Emmanuel and Cavour, and thus have deprived Prussia of her chief trump in 1866; but fate willed it otherwise.

In his relations with Spain, Baron Beust broke likewise with the past, and he did not hesitate a moment in recognising the Provisional Government, after Queen Isabella had left the country and vacated the throne of her own free-will, and he instructed the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires to be guided by the example of the other Powers, especially of England and France, thus showing his desire of seeing all European questions treated from a common point of view, and proving once more that he accepted a *fait accompli*, wherever it imposed itself, and that, if he did not tolerate an interference in the internal affairs of Austro-Hungary, he knew also how to abstain from

interference in those of other countries, and from showing a preference for any solution the Spanish nation might determine upon.

But his most perplexing task was to reconcile Prussia,* for the conqueror could not grasp the idea of Austria accepting her new position without a natural desire for retaliation, and, moreover, Count Bismarck seemed little pleased at the rapid reconstruction of the Habsburg Monarchy, which he meant to have crippled for ever, "to have stabbed to the heart," as Herr von Usedom, the Prussian Envoy at Turin, called it so appropriately in his despatch of the 19th of June, 1866, to General La Marmora.† But notwithstanding the little encouragement he found at Berlin, Baron Beust took the initiative by proposing to Prussia a revision of the Commercial and Customs Treaty of 1865; and his despatches to Count Wimpffen, at Berlin, and to the Austrian envoys at the other German courts, breathe a surprisingly friendly disposition towards the hereditary rival and the successful opponent, who, not content with the extraordinary results of 1866, had managed to add new fuel to the existing suspicions and grievances by the secret military treaties with the Southern States, which were a flagrant *coup de canif* in the Treaty of Prague, and which were a proof of Prussia's bad faith, as they were concluded in direct opposition to the stipulations of the

* Count Bismarck, in speaking of Count Beust's endeavours to make friends with Prussia, said to a foreign diplomatist, "*Quel triomphe de voir mon ennemi se cramponner à ma cravate.*"

† "*Un po' più di luce*," p. 316.

latter, and that at the very moment the ratifications were exchanged.

Obliged to point out the dangers of these new encroachments, the Baron managed to criticize the Prussian proceedings in a way which does the greatest honour to his sagacity; and his despatch of the 28th of March, 1867, is a perfect masterpiece of self-control, particularly meritorious as Napoleon III. was rather inclined the other way. For on finding that Sadowa was not alone an Austrian defeat, that he had been duped, and that the series of military conventions with the South had virtually united all Germany in Prussia's hands, the Emperor of the French felt so exasperated that he would have been only too glad to encourage hostile feelings in Austria. But Baron Beust was too careful a statesman to allow ruffled sentimentality to get the better of his reason, and accepting honourably what could no longer be altered, he waited for better opportunities to reconquer Austria's old position in the European areopagus.

The Luxemburg incident offered him a chance, and tendering at the right moment his *bons offices*, he obtained a complete diplomatic victory by bringing about the Conferences of London, and thus discarding a *pomme de discorde* which seriously threatened the peace of Europe; and the Austrian Chancellor's pacific attitude is the more to be valued as both contending parties seemed eager to win Austria by apparently tempting offers. It is no secret that France offered Silesia, and that Napoleon III. wished to

bring about an Austro-Franco-Italian alliance,* whilst Prussia proposed a great Austro-German alliance, much relished by the Southern States, whose sympathies were pointing towards Vienna, and an idea warmly advocated by the Bavarian statesman Count Tauffkirchen; but Count Beust preferred peaceful mediation to a sort of *fata morgana*, convinced as he was that nothing could restore to Austria her old position in Germany, whilst every disturbance of the peace would only hamper her interior development for years to come.

It would have been a grievous mistake, and a drawing of swords "*pour le roi de Prusse*," and although Count Beust could well say, "*On se m'arrache*," he remained firm, no more willing to associate the destinies of the Monarchy committed to his care with the Napoleonian dreams of the Emperor of the French than with the Cæsarean policy of Count Bismarck, and fully determined not recklessly to sacrifice the friendship of France, which Austria needed in the East, for the chimerical advantages held forth by the Prussian Premier, and which consisted, as the Count expressed himself at the time, in nothing else but a promise "of a newly bound copy of the Treaty of Prague." But this did not prevent Count Beust from seeking a *rapprochement* with Berlin on every available opportunity; the treaty of commerce, as I said before, was his doing; it was likewise Count

* Negotiations which remained in a state of embryo, and were far more one-sided than Prince Napoleon wishes to make out in his recent article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of March 1878.

Beust who begged the Emperor and the Archdukes to assume again the colonelcy of their Prussian regiments. He showed his good disposition in the Luxemburg Question, and his conciliatory spirit when he discovered the secret military treaties. In exchange he met with little encouragement from Prussia; Count Bismarck's irritable nerves were agitated by the disclosures of the Red Books, and Baron Werther's, the Prussian Ambassador's, disposition may be guessed from his celebrated despatch home, in which he assured his Government "that the Hungarians were still hoping and waiting for Prussia." Nevertheless Count Beust did what he could, and his visit to Queen Augusta at Baden-Baden was not without effect, for, although her Majesty is fond of calling herself "a political *sœur grise*," and of pretending that, attached to the "*althergebrachte*," she has no influence on the new state of things, a notable change for the better became soon apparent, whilst the Crown Prince of Prussia's visit to Vienna contributed additionally to impress the King of Prussia with Austria's conciliatory intentions, and aided materially to inaugurate, if not friendly, at any rate tolerable and less antagonistic relations between the two courts. Article V. of the Treaty of Prague was another stumbling-block, and it required all Baron Beust's courteous diplomacy to approach so vulnerable a point of Count Bismarck's armour-plated programme; but as I have treated this subject more in detail elsewhere,* I will only mention the fact *en passant*.

* See Sketch II.

However, if Count Beust observed a studiously passive attitude in all Western matters, we see him redouble in activity, as I mentioned already, whenever an opportunity offered itself in the East, and this is natural when we look at the geographical position of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, for what is more or less a question of colonial policy for England, a question of secondary interest for France and Germany, becomes a vital one for Austria.

A powerful development of the Slavonic element outside the Monarchy must necessarily react upon their Austrian brethren, and every move in that direction threatens a violent shifting of the existing equilibrium.

But the greater the danger, the clearer was also the necessity for Austria to counterbalance the growing Russian influence, and to prevent by timely and thorough reforms a premature break-up of the Turkish Empire.

Baron Beust felt this keenly, and, foretelling the impending crisis, he urged an efficient protection of the Sultan's Christian subjects, and when Prince Metternich was appointed as the Austro-Hungarian Plenipotentiary at the Conference of Paris, Count Beust summarised his views on the Turco-Greek conflict in a despatch of the 4th of January, 1869, by saying, "*Nos soins tendent constamment vers un but de paix et de conciliation*," and he protested distinctly against all insinuations that Austria was not fully agreeing with England and France in their *manière de voir*.

He followed in the footsteps of the late Prince

Metternich, who, although the first to recognize the national character of the Greek aspirations, had endeavoured, through his representative at the Conference of St. Petersburg, to bring about a common understanding of the Great Powers, and who opposed as much the isolated action of one of the Powers as the disturbance of the peace by exaggerated demands of the sufferers.

Count Beust wanted much the same, and his despatch of the 23rd of April, 1868, to Baron Testa, the Austrian Envoy at Athens, ought not to have left a doubt as to his intentions, for there he said clearly: "*Les destinés du royaume hellénique nous inspirent une sympathie sincère, mais c'est pour cela précisément que nous serions désolés de le voir se lancer dans une carrière aventureuse . . . nous ne prétendons aucunement contester à la Grèce les chances que l'avenir peut lui réserver, mais ces chances, il nous semble, qu'elle ne pourrait que les affaiblir si elle ne s'abstenait de tout ce qui serait de nature à exciter les méfiances et les inquiétudes de l'Europe. . . . Ce n'est pas à dire que nous demandions aux Hellènes d'être insensibles au sort d'un peuple auquel les rattachent des liens étroits de religion et de race. Nous-mêmes nous nous en préoccupons vivement, non moins que les autres puissances garantes.*" . . .

But whilst he endeavoured to calm the exuberancy of Greek patriotism, he addressed likewise the most friendly counsels to Constantinople, strongly advising the Sultan to give way to the Great Powers.

But what seems to me chiefly of interest to us is his staunch adherence to a *common policy* of the

Western Powers, and in all his despatches, as well as in the instructions to the Austrian Diplomatic Agents, we find the recommendation to act in concert with their *English* colleagues; and it cannot be denied that, if Turkey and Greece both gave way to the decisions of the Conference, it was due as much to the political *esprit de corps* with which Count Beust inspired the various Cabinets as to the dread of the Powers to see the Hellenic spark set fire to the Oriental powder magazine, all preferring to sacrifice—at least *pro tem.*—the aspirations of Greece to an inopportune re-opening of the Eastern Question, and to a possible dismemberment of Turkey at that moment.

It only remains to be seen if it was wise, for we must remember Russia's dread of an extension of Greece; and we shall see in no distant future if this will not be the trump the Western Powers will have to play against Russia's Panslavonic experiments of the present day, although the Conference of Berlin appeared not over-eager to settle this question in any radical manner.

If it was wise to avoid a radical solution by adopting half-measures may be doubtful; and as once before, at the time of the Congress of Laibach, in May 1821, the Western Powers might have upset all Russian schemes by boldly grappling with the Greek Question, so here again an opportunity was offered for annihilating Russian influence, and for nipping in the bud the Russian claim for a Greek Protectorate. The fear of a general conflict adjourned matters for

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a decennium, and it remains to be seen if Protocol XIII. of the Berlin Conferences will meet the requirements of the time, though Article 56 of the Berlin Treaty seems to recognize but lukewarmly the just claims of Greece.

It was perhaps the dread of this Russian and Panslavonic spectre on the horizon which induced Count Beust to endeavour with all his might to obtain more equitable terms for the Czar, so as to make his Majesty join the other Powers, instead of forcing him into an isolated action.

As I said before, the Count wanted to bring about a common policy in the East, and he worked for a division of the responsibilities as well as the sympathies, convinced that if Russia had alone the *onus* of the former that she would also harvest alone the latter; and the Count therefore did his best to impress Lord Clarendon and the Emperor of the French with the necessity of securing Russia by timely concessions. The present grave complications show how rightly he saw in the matter, and it is deeply to be lamented that Europe would not listen to his warnings. However, he did what he could, and the little that was obtained was chiefly due to his pressure on both the Porte and Greece, and his personal good relations with Fuad Pasha.*

However, those who, in these days of Turcomania, wish to be more enlightened on the Count's practical views on the Eastern Question will do well to peruse his despatches to Prince Metternich and to Baron

* Austrian Red Book, No. I. 1866–67, p. 106.

Prokesch;* moreover, they will find in Baron Henry de Worms' interesting work † an additional illustration of Count Beust's repeated, but isolated, efforts to make the Oriental merely a European family business, and to prevent Russia from having the satisfaction of settling it in her own way.

When the indignation of the civilized world was roused by the excesses of the Roumanians, and the disgraceful persecutions of the Jews in Moldavia, Baron Beust, who had induced the Emperor to consent to the diplomatic representation of the Principalities at Vienna, and who had shown a lively interest in the independence and national development of Roumania, was the first energetically to protest against the atrocities committed at Kalarash and Berlad, claiming naturally from the Government of Prince Charles what the Powers had been advocating at Constantinople, i.e. equality of creeds and equality before the law, two points evidently above Eastern comprehension.

He did not allow himself to be misled by the Radical Cabinet of M. Stefan Golesco, which shielded these infamies under a persistent denial of the facts, and when the Roumanian Secretary of the Foreign Department had the audacity of denouncing to the Great Powers the Austrian Agent at Jassy as the inventor of these malevolent rumours, the Austrian Chancellor insisted upon an immediate satisfaction for this gratuitous insult, and the result

* Austrian Red Book, No. I. 1866–67, p. 78 *et seq.*

† 'The Austro-Hungarian Empire,' by Baron Henry de Worms.

was the dismissal of the Roumanian Cabinet, and a formal and public declaration of the Government of Prince Charles disavowing the defamatory proceedings against M. de Wolfarth..

It was only when the new Premier, M. Cogalniceano,* disentangling himself from the aberrations of his Radical predecessors, inaugurated a new era of respect for the rights of all concerned, that Baron Beust instructed the Austrian Agent to renew the former relations of friendly and harmonious encouragement.

Another proof, not only of Austria's increasing interest in the East, but also of the desire of his Imperial Majesty and of his Chancellor to cement the good understanding with the Porte, may be found in the Emperor Francis Joseph's visit to Constantinople, and in his Majesty's presence at the opening of the Suez Canal, when it fell to the lot of Count Beust, who was accompanying his Imperial Master, to be mainly instrumental in preventing a rupture between the Sultan and his powerful vassal; and not only had the Count the satisfaction of discountenancing the intended sending of an ultimatum, but also of inducing the recalcitrant Khedive to give way to the Sultan's reclamations—a result which had the double advantage of proving beneficial to the interests of the Emperor's numerous subjects in the Levant, and of averting a war which would, without fail, have re-opened the Oriental Question, which all

* The present Prime Minister of sovereign Roumania.

Powers had at heart to leave dormant as long as possible.

In 1866, when Napoleon III. hesitated to throw his sword in the balance for the maintenance of the traditional equilibrium in the centre of Europe, Count Beust warned the Emperor of the French as to the inevitable consequences, predicting to his Majesty that at no distant future he would have to face single-handed the military Colossus which his inexplicable jealousy of the House of Habsburg was helping to rear.

When the unfortunate candidature of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern for the Spanish throne* threatened to disturb the peace, the Austrian Chancellor urged the Emperor Napoleon to be satisfied with Prince Leopold's renunciation; he advised looking to Spain, and not to Prussia, in the matter; and up to the last he instructed Prince Metternich to impress the French Cabinet with the probability, nay, with the certitude, that the first shot fired would throw the Southern States into the arms of King William, thus completing the Prussification of Germany, already indicated by the secret military treaties of 1866—a warning which we find corroborated in several of Lord Bloomfield's despatches of the time.†

Moreover, Count Beust gave France clearly to understand that she had not to hope for Austria's assistance; and if there had been the slightest

* See Sketch III.

† See Blue Book, 1871.

foundation for the Duc de Gramont's nonsensical boast "of having Austria in one pocket and the South of Germany in the other," one can only wonder that the Duke did not make a treaty, or insist upon something in black or white, before plunging France into isolated action. But nothing of this kind existed, and Prince Napoleon forgets to say, in his recent disclosures in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, that if the Emperor of the French offered in his letter * to the Emperor Francis Joseph to put all his available forces at the disposal of Austria, *if attacked*, that his Apostolic Majesty promised nothing in his autograph reply but "to make no treaty with a third Power *sans prévenir*"; whilst Count Beust, in his *pourparlers* and correspondence with the French Ambassador, had suggested "*une action diplomatique commune dans toutes les questions politiques*" as basis of an understanding which, if accepted, would have prevented the isolated blustering of France, with all its disastrous consequences.

To say that there was a secret treaty is a deliberate invention of those who wish to screen their responsibilities behind the imaginary failings of others; nothing of the kind existed, and even the late Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne could not help admitting "*that until the war broke out there was not one word of encouragement from Vienna by which the Cabinet of the Tuileries could have been misguided*," and the unauthorised opinions of certain ambulating

* Autograph letter of his Majesty the Emperor Napoleon III. of June 1869.

diplomatists ought surely not to have carried any weight at the Quai d'Orsay or the Tuileries.

It is true that, when the first shot was fired, the Count said, "*Tâchez d'être forts et nous verrons*," but then who can blame him, after Austria's sad experiences of 1859 and 1866, of having wished first to see how matters would turn? Lord Beaconsfield would very justly have called it "selfish patriotism," whilst Prince Bismarck assured the Count at Gastein, when all was over, "that he would have said and done the same in his place."

Sedan and the fall of the Empire proved that the Imperial Chancellor had acted wisely by insisting upon a strict neutrality, so little palatable to the Army and Court; and it proved that he had not underrated the power of Prussia, but even shown himself a better judge than most Prussian statesmen, who all, with perhaps the exception of Count Bismarck, had first anticipated a defeat.

One may truly say that he spared Austria endless misery, perhaps a second still more crushing defeat, by preventing her from moving; for whatever side she might have taken, no promises, no concessions, no advantages could have given her the preponderant position in the councils of Europe which Count Beust's passive and peaceful policy had reconquered for his master, and the greatest triumph for the Chancellor was that the victorious Prussian Empire offered Austro-Hungary her friendship at the conclusion of the war, whilst France did not reproach him with his neutral attitude—a proof that

on both sides they did justice to the honourable, and at the same time practical, policy of the Cabinet of Vienna, and that he could not be blamed for having kept aloof from the tempting phantasmagoria of French and Prussian charmers.

And here I ought to mention that Prince Bismarck and Count Beust passed, immediately after the peace, several weeks together at Gastein, in daily and most friendly intercourse; the Austrian statesman fully appreciating the eminently Prusso-patriotic qualities of his lucky adversary, whilst the latter pretended that Count Beust was "*der liebenswürdigste und objectivste Gegner.*"

It was shortly after this idyllic interview of the two Chancellors that the King of Prussia, during his stay at Salzburg, conferred on the Count* the Ribbon of the Black Eagle, his Majesty personally notifying to him his nomination with the words, "*Ich habe Sie grade ein wenig angeschwärzt,*" † a *calembourg* which failed not to find imitators in other quarters, for one well-known diplomatist immortalised the distinguished honour of which Count Beust had been the object, by saying, "*hier il l'était, aujourd'hui il l'a*"; answer, "*Leur bête noire,*"—poor Black Eagle.

But if Count Beust's genius and skill seemed to overcome all obstacles in the way of Austria's interior and exterior regeneration, there were at home cer-

* Who has nearly every Grand Cross under the sun, from St. Stephen and the Annunciada downwards.

† "I have just blackened you."

tain underground currents, dangerous to even the ablest pilot.

We must not forget that the Count was not Chancellor of an autocratic empire, but the Prime Minister of a constitutional monarchy; and where a Kaunitz or a Metternich could have imposed the will of their Imperial master, Count Beust had to consider the wishes, hopes, and claims of very heterogeneous elements, and of a people still in the infancy of constitutional life, of people accustomed to be guided by certain principles, certain traditions, certain hereditary leaders.

The Imperial Constitution of the 1st of January, 1868, had created a new state of things. Privileges had been curtailed, abuses abolished, personal vanity had in many instances been ruffled, and the rights and duties of all had been equalized and balanced. It was but natural that the losers should have grumbled, intrigued, and worked at a return to their old preponderances in some shape or other; and as it was impossible to think of shaking off the Imperial Constitution altogether, a fever of autonomy spread suddenly throughout the component parts of the realm, all basing their unwarranted pretensions on the Hungarian precedent, which bore no analogy whatever to their respective cases; for if Hungary had only been linked to Austria by the person of the common Sovereign,* none of the other parts of the Empire could invoke a similar connection,† and

* "*Personal-Union.*"

† Except one goes back to the days when Bohemia was an elective kingdom.

a recognition of the individual autonomy of all provinces would simply have been a dismemberment of the Monarchy.

I have mentioned before how much Count Beust was opposed to these retail national dreams of Poles, Greeks, Slavs, Tyrolese, and *tutti quanti*, and how he endeavoured to bring about a fusion of the various races and interests; however, as autonomical agitations were the only trumps his opponents could play against him, they availed themselves of these means for embarrassing his internal policy, hoping thus to regain a certain influence with the people, always prone to follow whoever makes them believe that they are wronged. But if the discontent which culminated in the Federalistic fluctuations and in the disastrous experiments of Count Hohenwart was to be attributed to the ambitions of national feeling, it would be unfair to the great families of the realm not to acknowledge the valuable support the Count derived from the disinterested support of many, amongst whom were foremost the Schwarzenbergs, Palavicini, Hoyos, *et j'en passe.*

But if the Czechs might have had some slight pretext for complaining, the Germans had decidedly none at all; whilst the Hungarians, like all spoilt children, were simply ungrateful, so that Count Beust might have used the words of Philip II. of Spain:—"*Mag mir Europa fluchen, von diesen hab ich Dank verdient.*"* Yet, notwithstanding all this, the Count was determined to save the monarchy *mal-*

* "May Europe curse me; they owe me thanks."

gré elle, and placing the future of Austro-Hungary above all personal feelings and petty resentment, he hesitated not a moment in staking his personal influence, and perhaps more. When, therefore, Count Hohenwart got the Emperor to sign "the Bohemian Fundamental Article," which was to restore the autonomy of Bohemia, and which would have created a sort of Austro-Hungaro-Czechish Trilogy, Count Beust hastened to point out to his Imperial master that his Majesty had countersigned the break-up of the Empire; and so impressed was the Emperor by the truth of the Chancellor's representations, which Count Andrassy could not help supporting *bon gré mal gré*, that the Imperial decree relative to Bohemia was then and there revoked, whilst Count Hohenwart had to resign — a double triumph for Count Beust, as not only his Majesty was thus adopting most graciously the views of his Chancellor, but as they were also shared by a large majority of the Delegations.

The Czechs were exasperated, their leaders were fuming, and the Crown was in a difficult predicament, for necessarily the susceptibility of the people, justly disappointed by Count Hohenwart's experiments, had to be conciliated; yet one may well call it a political contradiction when the Emperor resolved upon separating from Count Beust at the very moment his Majesty had endorsed the policy of his Minister by the repeal of the Fundamental Article and the dismissal of Count Hohenwart. It took

everybody by surprise, except Count Beust, who alone understood that his fall would *dorer la pilule* which the Czechs had so much difficulty in swallowing, and it is impossible to imagine a greater triumph for the head of a constitutional government and the leader of a parliamentary majority than to purchase by his resignation the triumph of his policy, of his views and measures. The Vienna *Neue Freie Presse*, of 1st January, 1872, said very truly: "We were standing at the borders of a precipice, when a Curtius threw himself, in full armour, into the depth that the abyss might close."

The excitement throughout the country was intense, and the Emperor, who called personally on the Count, thanked him, moreover, in a most flattering autograph letter for the "unselfish" and "self-sacrificing" way in which he had worked at the regeneration of the empire, nominating him at the same time a life member of the Upper House, and offering him the choice between the embassies of London, Paris, and Constantinople. But what was additionally cheering for the Count was the sympathising expression of public opinion in the Press and elsewhere. Thus one of the Viennese papers said: "We do not remember in the history of Austria any statesman having been the object of expressions of homage and sympathy such as Count Beust enjoys. Many hailed with loud expressions of joy on their accession resigned without being mourned; many overwhelmed with honours during their tenure of office disappeared quietly from the political stage;

many who seemed to enjoy boundless popularity had to retire ingloriously.

"Count Beust has seen great political movements during the five years he has been Austrian Minister, &c., but at no time of an era, according to the own words of the Emperor, so full of events was the Count's political influence at home and abroad more triumphant than at present . . . and we have a presentiment as if Austria had not yet renounced for ever the services of Beust."

But apart from these outbursts of regret in speech and print, more palpable tokens of the high appreciation of his eminent services were showered upon him from all parts of the Monarchy, and some fifty municipalities and corporations of the chief towns of the empire vied with each other in either bestowing upon him civic honours or presenting him spontaneously with eulogistic addresses, amongst which that of Vienna was foremost. It said :—

"In a moment when the entire population of Austria hastens to express their sympathies to your Excellency in numberless addresses, it will be permitted to the municipal council of the capital, which is proud to count your Excellency amongst her citizens, to express, in the name of the inhabitants of Vienna, the warmest admiration, and the sincerest regret at your Excellency's resignation.

"The inhabitants of Vienna admire in your Excellency a highly gifted and inspired statesman, to whose beneficial influence we owe the end of the

interior dissensions between Austria and Hungary, the restitution of the Constitution, the refusal of the Concordat, the peace of the realm, and, moreover, the friendly relations with our neighbours in North and South.

"May it please your Excellency to accept the sympathies of the inhabitants of Vienna, acquired by the benefits you have conferred, and by your manly fights for German ideas, constitution, liberty, right, and progress.—Vienna, November 24, 1871."

What more could a statesman wish than the nobly expressed sympathies of millions, of an entire nation? for, as a rule, the masses acclaim only men in power, and have but seldom grateful thoughts for the benefactor of yesterday. Count Beust may therefore look back with pride on what he has done for Austria, certain that only exceptional services can have secured him the exceptional popular favour which outlived his fall, and has followed him into the new sphere assigned him by the confidence of his Imperial master.

Needless to add that Count Beust paid us the compliment of electing for England. It was natural that our country, our people, our institutions should have had a particular attraction for the leader of German and Austro-Hungarian constitutionalism; and his staunch adherence to constitutional principles, parliamentary rule, commercial freedom, peaceful progress, and a common Oriental policy was certain to insure him a warm welcome in England.

After having been for seven years the able repre-

sentative of his Apostolic Majesty, a universal favourite with society, and a most popular member of the diplomatic body, we trust that the Count will long remain amongst us.

But at no time had we more reason for congratulating ourselves on the Emperor of Austria's selection than at the present moment, when the differences in the East require more than ever that the two countries should go hand in hand, a policy which had in Count Beust, as Imperial Chancellor, the warmest champion, and which finds in Count Beust, as Ambassador of Austro-Hungary, the ablest interpreter which the friends of an Anglo-Austrian alliance could wish.

The moment is so serious, and the Count's share in the past, and his part in the present negotiations is so prominent, that one may well be allowed to express the hope that both Cabinets will inspire themselves with the ideas and principles which Count Beust has been advocating for over a quarter of a century with reference to the East.

Had his advice been listened to, the calamities of the present terrible crisis might have been spared us.

"Timely concessions to and by all concerned, and for the rest a united action of Europe, and a division of responsibilities, duties, and rights,"—that is what the Count has been recommending for years; and it must be gratifying to himself to see how right he has been in his previsions, and in the remedies which

he suggested in the numerous despatches exchanged on the subject.*

Anxious for an understanding of the Great Powers, he thought it essential "*de tenir compte à la fois des intérêts des populations chrétiennes comme de ceux de la politique, qui exige le maintien de la domination musulmane*"; and reminding the various Cabinets of the modifications brought about by the Paris Conferences, he proposed a further revision of that diplomatical absurdity, the Treaty of Paris of the 30th of March, 1856, with the object of dissipating all incertitude as to the fate of the Sultan's Christian subjects, to whom neither the Hathoumaïoum nor the vague stipulations of the Treaty of 1856 offered serious guarantees. He insisted, moreover, most emphatically on the necessity of doing away as far as possible with the irritating restrictions imposed upon Russia, pointing out that instead of averting complications, as intended, an unnatural compression of Russia's "*liberté d'allures*" could only provoke a crisis fatal to the peace of Europe. He urged the Cabinets of London and Paris to enter without hesitation on a new track ("*dans une voie nouvelle*") to ensure a lasting understanding of the Powers ("*concert européen*"), impossible without securing the concurrence of Russia by timely concessions. He declared the neutralisation of the Black Sea, and the other fetters with which one had thought of binding the hands of Russia in 1856, to

* Austrian Red Book, No. I. 1866-67, pp. 75 to 126.

be a combination in no way happy for Austria; and by demanding for the Christian subjects of the Sultan, under the guarantee of the Powers, autonomous institutions, regulated by the difference of religion and races, he wanted to make them "*les obligés de l'Europe*," and to shelter the Ottoman Empire against threatening insurrectional movements.

He indicated thus not only what ought to have been done, but precisely what Europe is endeavouring to do at the present moment, after a disastrous war and endless bloodshed, the prevention of which Count Beust had so much at heart. It is therefore with undoubted satisfaction that he will greet the treaties of the 4th of June and the 13th of July as a step towards the realization of the idea propounded by him for so many years, that the Turkish Empire can only be maintained upon its tottering legs by a direct control of the Great Powers in the interior and financial management of its affairs, and by an elimination of the exterior and interior causes of discontent, distrust, and disorder.

If our isolated and conditional protectorate of the Asiatic half of Turkey, and Austria's equally isolated "administration" of Bosnia and Herzegovina, will be more than a floating bridge over an open abyss, time alone can prove; yet, fully recognising the great move made by the Berlin Conferences in view of a radical settlement, and truly grateful to Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury for having preserved at this moment the European peace, for having re-established our threatened prestige and influence

in the East, and once more taken in hand the almost desperate task of keeping Turkey alive, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that Count Beust's programme of a collective tutelage, and of a supervision delegated to combined action of all Powers, offered less dangers than individual interference, which, doing away with the principles of solidarity, leaves the Eastern Question once more at the mercy of the caprices and requirements of the moment. But then, in great things as in small, the "*mieux*" is often *l'ennemi du bien.*

LONDON, *July* 1878.

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